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APRIL 1994

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'WE'LL DO IT THE MILAN WAY'

SACCHI ON THE ITALIAN JOB

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Some people are on the pitch, they think it's all over . . . it is now! Geoff Hirst scores his third — and England's fourth — goal in the 1966 World Cup Final win over West Germany at Wembley.

IN THIS ISSUE

ESM EUROPEAN SPORTS MAGAZINES

APRIL 1994
VOL.34 NO.7

WORLD CUP USA94 COUNTDOWN

INTRODUCTION 27
COLOMBIA 28-29
GERMANY 30-31
GREECE 32-33
WORLD CUP STARS 34-35
HOLLAND 36-37
ITALY 38-39
MEXICO 40-41

features

Italian chief . . . Arrigo Sacchi in his Milan days.

ALMOST READY . . . INTERVIEW WITH ITALIAN COACH ARRIGO SACCHI AS HE ATTEMPTS TO GET HIS PLAYERS READY FOR THEIR WORLD CUP CHALLENGE IN THE US THIS SUMMER
Paddy Agnew 4-5

A TALE OF TWO CRISES . . . SPECIAL REPORT FROM LISBON AND MADRID ON THE PROBLEMS FACING TWO OF EUROPE'S GREATEST CLUBS — BENFICA AND REAL MADRID
Keir Radnedge 6-9

Iberian kings . . . the Bernabeu Stadium (above) and the trophy room at Benfica (top).

news

19 INSIDE OUT
26 WORLD PRESS
46-49 DIARY & TV

regulars

The Keir Radnedge Commentary page 10-11. **Italy** page 14-15. **Spain** page 16-17. **France** page 18. **Germany** page 20. **Rest of Europe** page 21-25. **Dallas Cup** page 42. **South America** page 44-45. **UK** page 50-51. **Trevor Brooking** page 52. **Asia** page 56-57. **Africa** page 58-59. **Results** page 61-62. **Brian Glanville** page 64-65. **A-Z of World Stadia** page 66. **Next month** page 67.

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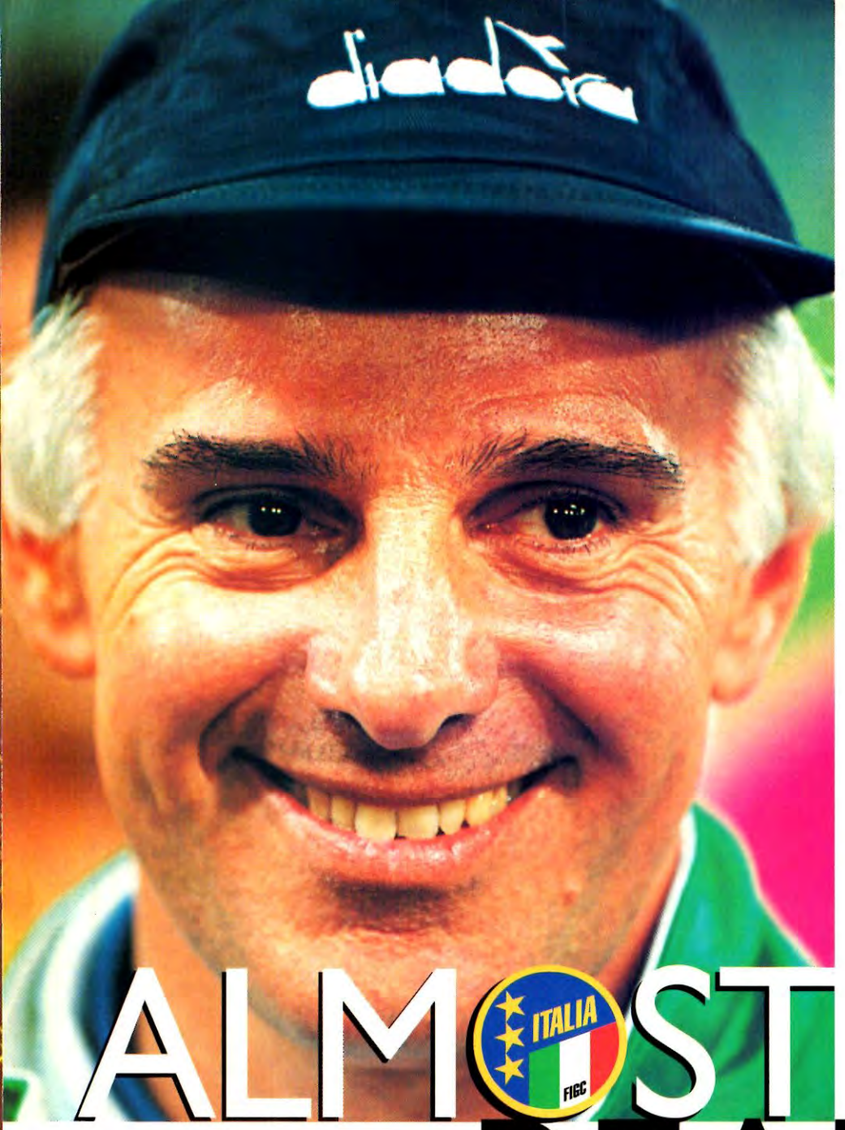


ALMOST READY

Sacchi tunes his squad for record attempt

INTERVIEW

BY PADDY AGNEW

'I often felt that British professionals were the best in the world, in terms of attitude and physical commitment. That time, however, is past and now I'd say that Italians are the most professional footballers in the world in terms of technical and physical attributes and on and off the field attitudes'

THE RED Ferrari parked right in front of the main door suggested a classy kind of joint. So, too, did the white grand piano in the bar.

The La Borghesiana centre near Rome is called a sports club, but don't let that fool you because this is really a country club of the most exclusive kind.

Exclusive enough to serve as winter training headquarters for the Italian soccer team, preparing for this summer's World Cup. As you might expect from the world's soccer capital, preparations for a World Cup are a serious business.

Between now and the beginning of US '94, Italian coach Arrigo Sacchi will have his players together for 42 days training.

Three days in February before a friendly against France, three days last month prior to a friendly against Germany and three days this month all serve as the lead-in to the final World Cup training camp which stretches from May 10 right throught to tournament kick-off on June 17, with only a few days break.

By contrast, the Republic of Ireland, Italy's opening opponents in New York on June 18, will be lucky to spend time together between now and D Day.

When a relaxed and smiling Sacchi arrives for his daily news conference, he is more than willing to talk.

Sacchi, complete with regulation sponsored track suit and baseball cap, ushers the hacks into the conference room before answering questions.

Cautiously, he concedes that Italy might have an advantage over Ireland, at least in terms of preparation: "There's no way, I suppose, that you could persuade the FA to extend the English season to June, is there?"

Jokes aside, any group of players who have to play up to 80 games per season are handicapped, their technique and physique both suffer . . . and indeed that would appear to be what has happened to English soccer.

"Mind you, let me set the record straight, I've already played against the Irish in America two years ago and I know the side. Ireland are a real team, just like Switzerland and Mexico are real teams and this is a very tough group we're all in."

Sacchi is often seen as the great technical innovator of the 1980s in Italian soccer.

He is the man who introduced bold attacking soccer with Milan and, what is more, won a league title and two Champions Cups playing it.

His hard-working, hard-running, chasing, disciplined game at times seems more Northern European, indeed more British, than Italian. Sacchi confirms the impression, when saying: "There was a time when I would have loved to train a British side.

"I often felt that British professionals were the best in the world, in terms of attitude and physical commitment. That time, however, is past and now I'd say that Italians are the most professional footballers in the world in terms of technical and physical attributes and on and off the field attitudes"

With US '94 qualification achieved, Sacchi can relax and reassume past strategies and future hopes.

Sacchi is aware that not everyone was entirely convinced by an Italian side who dropped three points to Switzerland and needed a draw in the final group game against Portugal to go through.

He opens up on a defensive note: "People suggest that I have called up too many players, 69, in my two years in charge.

"I say that the large number is proof of the current well-being of Italian soccer. It's obvious, anyway, from recent results achieved not just by Italy but also by Italian clubs in European competitions that Italian soccer is currently very, very strong.

"My task is to find 22 players for the US who will prove homogenous from the physical, mental, technical and tactical viewpoints.

"I look during league games for the characteristics I want and then bring the players together here at team training and see how they work out. Some players hit it off, and some don't."

Sacchi is the first to concede that Italy have to improve if they are to achieve their minimum requirement — getting to the semi-finals, but he claims: "This Italy can become a great side.

"We already have three world-class players in Franco Baresi, Roberto Baggio and Paolo Maldini, and it's up to others to emerge.

"But, for the time being, we're more a talented collection of individuals than a great team side, a homogenous group. My Italy will be a great team only when it seems to have lots of time when it's on the ball and, in contrast, is quick to win back possession."

Sounds very like the Milan game. As in his early days with Milan, however, there are signs that not everyone is willing or able to understand what is required.

After all, a player called on to play a more cautious Italian-style game by a club manager threatened with the sack will surely find it difficult to adapt to the Sacchi requirements.

Some remarkable shouting matches between the coach and some of Italy's most famous names at early Italian team sessions of the Sacchi era would seem to bear out the point.

Sacchi disagrees: "There's nothing unilateral about Italian soccer. There are different types of football played by different sides. There has been an ideological confrontation in Italian soccer in recent years that has made the game better, more entertaining and has improved the quality of our players. My players believe in my game."

They had better believe in it. Even though Sacchi says that the door is not closed on any player who may emerge between now and June, in truth he already has his ideal formation clearly outlined.

Gianluca Pagliuca (Sampdoria) plays in goal behind a defence led by the Milan trio of Franco Baresi, Alessandro Costacurta and Paolo Maldini, with Parma's Antonio Benarrivo at right-back.

In midfield, Dino Baggio (Juventus), Demetrio Albertini (Milan) and Giuseppe Signori (Lazio) are the first choices, while Pier-Luigi Casiraghi (Lazio) is the man chosen to join European Player of the Year Roberto Baggio (Juventus) in attack.

In effect, Sacchi has worries only about his first choice right-back and right-sided midfielder.

The Milan trio of Roberto Donadoni, Stefano Eranio and Gianluigi Lentini (if fit) are the main contenders for the midfield berth, while Casiraghi's regular exclusion from the Lazio side (thanks to Alen Boksic's excellent form) could yet mean that Sacchi will opt to rely on Torino's impressive striker, Andrea Silenzi.

Indeed, Silenzi was one of the few positive notes to emerge from Italy's unimpressive 1-0 defeat (only Sacchi's second in 20 games in charge of Italy) by France in Naples last February.

Sacchi emerged probably more worried than relieved from that loss because the all-too "friendly" attitude taken by his side meant key individuals such as Baresi and Roberto Baggio played badly while, collectively, the side completely misfired.

Still, international friendlies mean little and reveal even less.

In the meantime, Sacchi not only has to face criticism and a barrage of advice about his selection for US '94, he also has had to explain why he chose not to use the Italian Federation's training centre at Coverciano, near Florence, for World Cup preparations.

"To obtain the maximum, it is necessary to have a certain situation, a type of peace and isolation where we can all concentrate together," he explains.

Coverciano, he claims, is too close to Florence, and training there can easily be disrupted by rowdy fans, as indeed happened to Azeglio Vicini's Italy on the eve of Italia '90.

"I'm not arrogant. When I trained little Fusignano, we used to have practice matches with a team of forestry workers."

Between now and June, however, the only forestry workers Arrigo Sacchi encounters will be those working on the grounds at Sportilia and Milanello, his chosen training centres in May.

The last-named centre may be familiar. It is, of course, Milan's training ground near Varese.

The Milan influence in terms of geography, personnel and attitude would appear to be everywhere. It remains only for this Italian side to play like Milan. If they do, then Italy will win the World Cup for a record fourth time, to go with those of 1934 (in Italy), 1938 (France) and 1982 (Spain).

But to do so, Italy must prove that Milan did not owe much of their success to three Dutchmen called Ruud Gullit, Frank Rijkaard and Marco Van Basten.

Sacchi has his work cut out.

PAGLIUCA

SIGNORI

BAGGIO

Winner . . . Sacchi with Milan's 1990 Champions Cup.

'My Italy will be a great team only when it seems to have lots of time when it's on the ball and, in contrast, is quick to win back possession from the opposition'

A TALE OF TWO CRISES

THE BIGGER THE CLUB, THE BIGGER THE CRISIS. PROOF IS TO BE FOUND IN MADRID AND IN LISBON. REAL MADRID AND BENFICA MAY HAVE BEEN RIDING HIGH IN THE LEAGUE AND IN EUROPE BUT BOTH ARE SHORT ON CASH AND EVERY SETBACK ON THE PITCH RAISES HOWLS OF HORROR FROM THE FANS.

FROM KEIR RADNEDGE

PART I - REAL MADRID:

Ask not for whom the bells toll . . .

REAL MADRID lifted the media siege temporarily when, in their own Estadio Santiago Bernabeu, they defeated Spanish League leaders Deportivo La Coruna 2-0.

But the respite for president Ramon Mendoza and coach Benito Floro could only have been momentary and the depth of intensity of the crisis surrounding Madrid was written in telephone numbers.

The previous Tuesday Madrid had crashed 3-0, in that same once-impregnable stadium, to the island upstarts of Tenerife in the second leg of a Spanish Cup quarter-final. Madrid's exit by 5-1 on aggregate was the worst in a series of humilations barely credible for those with any sense of football history.

The following day *Marca*, the capital's own sports daily newspaper, urged readers to phone in and vote on whether Floro should be sacked. In seven hours no fewer than 26,000 calls were received. A further 28,000 calls were logged by the next day's opinion poll on embattled president Mendoza.

The consensus was negative. Some 62 per cent thought Floro should go, 38 thought he should stay; the Mendoza vote was 79 per cent against, 21 in favour. It said everything about Madrid's season that bespectacled, schoolmasterish Floro, on learning the result, raised the ghost of a smile and muttered: "That's a vote of confidence considering the way our results have been going." Floro gives the impression not so much of a man out of his depth as much as a boy set to do a man's job and learning one painful lesson after another along the way. Life at Albacete, whom he brought out of the Third Division, was never like this.

At Albacete the level of expectation was zilch and Floro was the star. At Madrid, quite the opposite. The players are superstars and expect to be treated as such by the coach as well as the fans.

Keeping astride the tiger is not an easy trick. Votes of confidence, from the public or the board of directors, have a way of being quickly forgotten. Not forgotten, however, are the days of Alfredo Di Stefano and Ferenc Puskas, of Hampden vintage 1960 and that legendary 7-3 Champions Cup demolition of Eintracht Frankfurt.

That's the nub of Madrid's problems. Nobody is going to live up to a legend now so far receded into history that half that great Madrid team are now dead: the full-backs Marquitos and Pachin, the Brazilian right-winger Darcy Canario and the wing-halves, the iron-legged Jose Maria Vidal, the captain at Hampden, Jose Maria Zarraga, and the coach, Miguel Munoz.

Even Madrid's kit has been tarnished by the progress of years: shirt adverts and kit designers' ugly blue fringes sully the once-pristine all-white

Goal achieved . . . Real Madrid celebrate after their 1960 Champions Cup Final demolition of Eintracht Frankfurt.

which was copied far and wide — among others, by Tottenham in Europe and by Don Revie on taking over at Leeds — in the hope that some of Madrid's magical lustre would rub off (Barcelona's refusal to concede shirt advertising has plenty to do with Catalan regional pride but a not insignificant factor is refusal to be seen following where Madrid have led).

Madrid could do with a touch of that old white magic. The Spanish press speculate endlessly on the fate of poor Floro, though the revival against La Coruna put the employment crisis on ice until after the Cup-winners Cup quarter-final against Paris Saint-Germain. But the problem is deeper than that. The point was made after Tenerife's all-conquering visit by Jorge Valdano.

He has a unique perspective. In 1986, Valdano won the World Cup with Argentina and the UEFA Cup with Madrid. Now he happens to be coach of the Tenerife side who not only thrashed Madrid in the cup quarter-finals but denied them the Spanish league title on the last day of the last two seasons. Valdano, a most articulate and intelligent football philosopher, says: "Madrid's crisis cannot be solved by changing the coach. This would be much too simplistic. The problem is institutional."

That means the fans' unreasonable level of expectation; that means the paranoic insistence on measuring everything against Barcelona; that means, above all, Mendoza.

His successes in expanding Spain's trading links with the former Soviet Union and in the horse racing world, led him to campaign aggressively for the Madrid presidency in 1985. He and many other members had grown impatient with the old grandees in the boardroom. They wanted the "new Spain" to be reflected in so-called progressive commercial policies.

Not that the "old" Real Madrid were blind to commercial opportunities. Antonio Calderon, general manager of the club for 25 years through the greatest period, made that very clear in an interview celebrating his 90th birthday.

The modest, pioneering sponsorship deal which Madrid secured in the early 1960s with Philips was precisely in response to the club's falling-out with the Banco Mercantil Industrial.

In 1985, when Madrid were on the brink of winning the first of two successive UEFA Cups, Mendoza's aggressive "modern" campaigning forced out Luis De Carlos, a Spanish gentleman of the old school who had reluctantly assumed the presidency aftr the death in 1978 of the legendary Santiago Bernabeu. But the commercial aggression of the new post-Franco Spain went hand in hand with the collapse of the power of the old, controlling military and political cliques. That, in turn, shattered the balance of power within Spanish football.

Real Madrid could no longer call the political tune. Respect had to be earned, more than ever before, out on the pitch. And no longer could Madrid intimidate the Barcelonas, the Bilbaos, the Real Sociedads or, ultimately, even the likes of La Coruna.

Mendoza inherited a winning team and his first major decision — appointing the rising star of the Dutch coaching school, Leo Beenhakker — was his best. Madrid won the league five years in a row. But it was, to be honest, the team De Carlos had unwillingly bequeathed him.

Mendoza reasoned, quite logically, that to keep the team together would involve paying Italian-level wages. To raise such funds would demand a redevelopment and expansion to a minimum capacity of 100,000 of the Estadio Bernabeu. The stadium ➢

SPANISH LEAGUE PRIMERA DIVISION

REAL MADRID 2
(Morales 56, Michel 71)
LA CORUNA 0

Att: 65,000.
Ref: Lopez Nieto.

Madrid: Buyo — Chendo, Lasa, Alkorta, Sanchis, Hierro, Morales, Michel, Dani (Ramis 63), Milla, Dubovsky (Villaroya 81).

La Coruna: Liano — Voro, Nando, Paco, Djukic, Mauro Silva, Mariano, Donato (Claudio 68), Manjarin, Fran, Bebeto (Alfredo 76).

Goal . . . Real's first, scored by Morales.

A TALE OF TWO CRISES

REAL MADRID:

work, only just completed, cost far more than estimated, around £20million. This, plus the near-collapse of the Banesto bank which controlled the promotional subsidiary contracted to the club, virtually wiped out Madrid's cashflow.

Apart from running out of money, Mendoza's Madrid ran out of luck — losing the league title twice in succession on the last day of the season in Tenerife. The ultimate irony is that Tenerife coach Valdano is considered probably the ideal man for the Madrid job but may have forfeited the fans' sympathy through the very success in exile which has proved his capabilities.

Luck remains at a premium. Completing the third tier of terracing raised the humidity within the stadium and has turned the pitch into a bumpy liability. Further, a string of injuries to key players meant Madrid attacked La Coruna with two novice strikers in Jose Luis Morales and Dani, plus the Slovak winger, Peter Dubovsky, whose confidence has been shot to pieces.

Fortunately, midfielder Michel remains one of European football's outstanding creative talents: one of those rare players alone worth anyone's admission money.

In the second half he swung the game — first providing the corner spectacularly converted by Morales, then by volleying home Dubovsky's headed cross, the Slovak's only positive contribution of the evening.

Incredible that Spain may go to the World Cup finals without Michel. But he is to national boss Javier Clemente what Chris Waddle was to Graham Taylor.

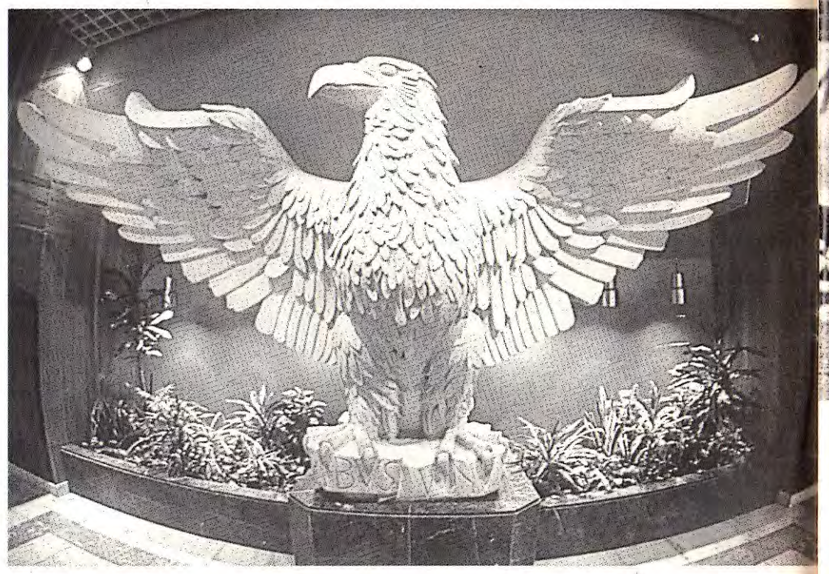
Madrid's senior players believe that the media must share some blame for the aura of crisis.

Two days after Madrid crashed to Tenerife, so Barcelona were dumped out of the Cup, losing 1-0 at home to a Second Division Real Betis who had so little confidence they fielded a string of reserves, resting senior men for the weekend's next instalment in their promotion campaign.

Madrid midfielder Rafael Martin Vazquez said: "At least we lost to a good team. Barcelona's defeat was, really, much worse than ours. But you wouldn't think so to read the papers or watch TV. Everyone has a fixation about a Madrid crisis."

Perhaps that was why Mendoza, even after beating La Coruna, found it hard to raise a smile. Floro, finally sacked and replaced by Vicente Del Bosque following Madrid's 1-0 "Recopa" defeat by Paris Saint-Germain, will quickly fall on his coaching feet somewhere else. But there is no way back for failed presidents.

PART II - BENFICA:



Where Eagles dare not fail

BENFICA are all but crowned Portuguese champions for the 30th time in their red-and-white history.

A 2-0 victory over FC Porto in the Estadio da Luz lifted them six points clear of the outgoing champions.

Yet Benfica, for all their trophy-packed history, for all their 130,000-capacity stadium, are just struggling out of the black shadow of the most humiliating year in their history: a year in which they lost two star players (Paulo Sousa and Antonio Pacheco) because their pay cheques bounced, a year in which their manoeuvring to bring Paulo Futre home from Atletico Madrid brought down the controllers of the state television station and enforced Futre's sale to Italy after only four months.

So how do Benfica keep afloat? Quite simple. Nobody can afford the price of failure. Benfica are that big. Much bigger, in comparative terms, than Real Madrid or Barcelona in Spain, Milan or Juventus in Italy, Manchester United or Liverpool in England, Rangers or Celtic in Scotland.

More and more, the mixture of sport and business which football has become has turned the game into a microcosm of society. It also has turned the prime clubs into pillars of that society.

On the Sunday Benfica played Porto, the daily newspaper *Publico* — and this is a country with two daily sports newspapers — published on its front page a picture and brief cross-reference report about the murderous mortar which killed 66 people in a market place in Sarajevo. Believe it or not, but pages two to six were taken up, not with editorial anguish over the plight of innocent men, women and children in Bosnia, but with a preview of the Big Match.

I write this not in particular criticism of *Noticias*, which was not the only newspaper which so cold-bloodedly gave its readers what they really wanted. But that may demonstrate the enormous importance of Sport Lisboa e Benfica.

The club's museum tells exactly the same story though with more glittering evidence. It is packed with row upon row of shiny and not-so shiny cups, baubles, mementoes and souvenirs presented on the great occasions.

There are two of those hideously vast Ramon de Carranza trophies from Cadiz; one silver Tower of Hercules prize from the Teresa Herrera event in La Coruna; a wrought iron coach and horses presented by Penarol to mark the clubs' duel in the 1961 World Club Cup; picture upon picture of the club's great teams down the years; even, touchingly, the Torino pennant handed over on May 3, 1949, by skipper Valentino Mazzola at the benefit match the day before he and all his team-mates, returning home, were killed in the Superga air disaster.

Yet those baubles are not even half the story. How can a football club be that big?

For one thing, Benfica is not only a football club. In the gymnasia beneath the Estadio da Luz, in the halls and the mini stadia aroundabout, some 10,000 members practise around 24 sports from rugby to chess, from athletics to martial arts. Their achievements also have a place in the museum, with rows of silverware for anything from ice hockey to table tennis.

More, still, than that.

Benfica, as a result of a membership expansion directly related to attempts to resolve the cash crisis, now have more than 100,000 members. Number 100,000 is Jose Fernando Oliveira Goncalves, manager of a textiles company. The number fell to him by chance, since when his phone has hardly stopped ringing with requests for interviews from all sectors of the media.

That is the size of Benfica. It is, simply, a social colossus and a social phenomenon.

Sporting Clube, a mile up the road, and FC Porto, are great clubs and also institutions. But they do not hold a candle to Benfica. Benfica have provided a fixed point of reference in Portuguese society through both dictatorship and democracy. Politicians may come and go but Benfica go on for ever. The motto E Pluribus Unum is writ large beneath the huge stone eagle at the main entrance to the stadium.

One for all and all for one. The spirit pervades and the dressing rooms and, the fervent fans will tell you, enters into the souls of the players.

Going too far? Maybe. Maybe not. Seeing, after all, should be believing. Against Porto, Benfica were hosting Portugal's Match of the Season. Porto had their problems: Bobby Robson had taken over as coach from Tomislav Ivic only two weeks before; Jaime Magalhaes was injured. But Porto had not been crowned national champions two years in succession without good cause or good reserves.

A crowd of 60,000 looked almost lost in the drizzle in the Estadio da Luz but still raised, with their fireworks, a smoke-screen which enveloped the pitch for the opening couple of minutes. The rest of the country watched on television.

Followers of Portuguese league football will know that pace is not a notable feature of the landscape. But this was different.

Perhaps it was the pressure on both clubs: Benfica had to win to extend their championship lead while Porto needed a draw merely to stay in touch and a win to restore both morale and their hopes of a title hat-trick.

After five minutes Benfica keeper Neno was in the utmost difficulty, palming an inswinging corner off his goal-line; at the other end Vitor Baia was equally alert to hold a dashing volley from Rui Costa.

After 23 minutes Benfica coach Toni substituted the limping, statuesque veteran spearhead, Rui Aguas, with Russia's more mobile Sergei Yuran.

He was rewarded after only 12 more minutes. Yuran laid a visionary pass square inside the Porto defence, Stefan Schwarz accelerated into the gap and fired the ball to the six-yard box, where Ailton stabbed it home. Schwarz could not have hoped for a more effective way to impress watching Dragoslav Stepanovic; the Bayer Leverkusen coach was not only spying out Benfica ahead of their Cup-winners Cup duel but was considering recommending a bid for Schwarz.

Four minutes after Ailton's goal, Porto fell into numerical arrears when centre-back Fernando Couto was sent off for jabbing a retaliatory elbow into wily Brazilian centre-back Mozer's face. In that undisciplined moment, Porto lost the game.

Bravely, Robson decided at half-time to maintain his attacking tactic and play with only three full-time defenders.

Better finishing on the break might have brought his reward. Instead, the only other goal was scored by Rui Costa for Benfica in the 53rd minute after Yuran — again in the thick of the action — had set Vitor Paneira free on the right.

In the closing half-hour Benfica might have rattled in another four goals. Instead poor shooting and the superb Vitor Baia's reflexes held them at bay.

Porto, in one way, were fortunate to escape with only a two-goal defeat; on the other hand, their courage in pressing forward with 10 men earned the right to defeat but with honour.

Benfica coach Toni paid tribute afterwards to the way his men had risen to the occasion; Robson paid tribute to the manner in which his own players had carried on after Couto's dismissal.

So Benfica, blithely turning a deaf ear to crisis talk, stroll on towards the Champions League. Is this a miracle? No, merely a lack of significant opposition.

Porto have changed coaches in mid-term and Couto's expulsion betrayed their unsteady nerves; as for Sporting, they have not raised a serious challenge to Benfica in more than a decade. The rest are so much canon-fodder.

Benfica fans would say that is more than mere good news for Benfica — it is good news for the country.

PORTUGUESE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE

BENFICA 2
(Ailton 35, Rui Costa 54)

FC PORTO 0

Att: 60,000.
Ref: Veiga Trigo.

Benfica: Neno — Veloso, Mozer, Helder, Schwarz, Kulkov, Vitor Paneira, Rui Costa, Joao Pinto Vieira, Rui Aguas (Yuran 22), Ailton (Cesar Brito 66).

FC Porto: Vitor Baia — Joao Pinto, *Fernando Couto, Aloisio, Rui Jorge, Andre, Rui Filipe (Secretario 66), Timofte (Paulinho Santos 73), Semedo, Kostadinov, Drulovic.

** Fernando Couto sent off, 39min.*

Commentary

Keir Radnedge

From LISBON A SECURE place in the social calendar of the international game has been allotted to the annual gala organised in Estoril, near Lisbon, by *A Bola*, the Portuguese sports newspaper which is one of the members of the European Sports Magazines (ESM) group in which *WORLD SOCCER* is involved.

This year's Gala comprised an international football symposium (right), featuring Sepp Blatter (inset) and Guido Tognoni (FIFA), Paolo Casarin (FIFA's technical adviser on refereeing), Bobby Robson (FC Porto coach and ex-England manager), Roy Hodgson (Switzerland national coach), Jim Trecker (US '94) and Ross Berlin (ISL).

The Gala dinner, at the Estoril Casino, included the presentation of the Vitor Santos Award (for services to football) to Blatter, the *Afrique Football* Player of the Year award to Rashidi Yekini, the Portuguese domestic awards to Jorge Cadete (top scorer 1992-93), Rui Costa (Young Footballer of the Year), Joao Vieira Pinto (Footballer of the Year) and Benfica coach Toni (*RTP* award for services to Portuguese football).

HOW NOW, JOAO?

WE OPENED the debate in those columns last month: what does the future hold if Joao Havelange remains as president of FIFA?
Whispers in Lisbon suggest that, for many administrators and officials, the Pele Affair in Las Vegas was the last straw.

It was inescapable evidence which many had long tried to ignore — that the ageing Havelange (right) is past his sell-by date. So who takes over? For the first time, the subject is being overtly discussed. UEFA president Lennart Johansson is one name being canvassed; the other obvious one is general secretary Sepp Blatter (far right).

But why should Blatter run? He has all the power he can use since he is also FIFA's chief executive and this is a position which is not dependent on votes at a FIFA Congress.

Havelange, apparently, would like to see his son-in-law, Ricardo Teixeira, president of the Brazilian Conferederation, promoted up the international ladder — another worrying development.

We may, in these columns, have set the public debate in motion but this issue is now being discussed in Germany, Italy, France and Switzerland. Recently, he and Blatter held a long private discussion about his wish to stand for a further four years. Be sure that further discussions will follow with senior figures in the regional confederations.

According to one theory, Blatter remains the most likely successor because the rest of the world would not want Johansson because his accession would represent a return to European control of FIFA. Blatter's appointment would return the FIFA presidency to a European, but one who would continue to pursue Havelange's commercial/internationalist policies. Also, it has been suggested he might appoint Peter Velappan, highly-respected general secretary of the Asian Confederation, as his own successor as FIFA chief executive. That, of course, would be a highly popular prospect in football's developing worlds.

Blatter remains a figure of great suspicion to UEFA, particularly over the way in which he followed up his criticisms of the Champions League expanion by producing his own proposals for an expanded world club championship. But Blatter is an accomplished football diplomat. More than one can say for Havelange, now under pressure as never before.

FIFA block the tackle from behind

HERE'S news to make British football shudder: the tackle from behind is to be subject to the red card treatment.

Sepp Blatter confirmed several weeks of speculation when he told me: "I will personally say to all our World Cup referees that anyone who tackles from behind must be shown the red card. There can be no doubt: a player who attacks another from behind is committing a very grave premeditated foul. That is direct violence which can only be punished by sending him off."

And it makes no difference where that foul takes place on the pitch.

Blatter added: "It is as serious on the halfway line as it is in the penalty area. I will ask all our referees: are you content to carry out this instruction? If he is doubtful then I strike his name off our list. The greatest responsibility for positive football lies with coaches and technical directors. At FIFA we have no no control over that. But we do have the power to give our referees the very best conditions in which to do their work, as long as they are firm in what they do.

"In Italy in 1990 we identified many problems with referees. I remember the Italian, Luigi Agnolin, in one of the Romania games. There was a very bad foul. He called the players together and made them shake hands and that was all. It was a very poor example to the rest of the game.

"We cannot hope to have a positive World Cup in the United States unless players understand that violence cannot be excused under any circumstance."

Perhaps even more significant than cracking down on the tackle from behind may be the clarification about offside. Paolo Casarin, Italian former referee and now FIFA special adviser, has targeted — among many other issues — the established wisdom that the defence always should be given the benefit of the doubt.

Casarin said in Lisbon: "Where is this written in the Laws of the Game? Nowhere. It has been created out of fear. We are telling linesmen now that they must remember that a player in line with the last-but-one defender is still onside. The linesman must raise his flag for offside only IF HE IS SURE that the attacking player is offside.

"I have watched many videos of the best teams in Europe — Milan, Barcelona, Real Madrid. In a game they make perhaps 20 serious attacks. Perhaps 10 attacks reach the penalty area. Then three or four may bring a goal. But we have been able to identify at least two or three occasions in a match where a linesman has raised his flag because he is afraid an attacking player MAY be offside.

"That is denying the team, the players, the fans up to 20 per cent more activity in the goal area. Our game cannot afford to be so inefficient. Public sport is a very competitive world."

FIFA'S decision that clubs must foot the insurance bill for international players on duty for their countries threatens to backfire. The French clubs' union wants federation president Jacques Georges to protest to FIFA and obtain, at the least, an interim suspension of the order.

Clubs' spokesman Gervais Martel says: "How could FIFA come to this sort of unilateral decision without undertaking any discusion with the people most directly concerned, the clubs? It's impossible that, just when we are trying to put our financial house in order, we should be subjected so arbitrarily to these extra costs. Already our clubs pay the players' wages when they are on national team duty. Maybe we will have to think about that."

The issue also has been a lively bone of contention in Belgium after the clubs there counted up to 29 Belgian-based professionals being needed for the finals of the African Nations Cup in Tunisia.

The decision was taken, of course, to help third world nations whose attempts to call up European-based professionals for major events were being thwarted because they could not afford to pay the insurance premiums being demanded — mischievously in many cases, it must be admitted — by the players' clubs.

Now it could prove counter-productive. Of course, clubs, under pressure from the international bodies, will release their players with reluctance for competitive matches. But they will be much more reluctant not to say downright impossible when it comes to allowing players to fly off home for friendly matches.

Was that considered?

'I will personally say to all our World Cup referees that anyone who tackles from behind must be shown the red card' — Sepp Blatter

Wise words from Robson

THIS takes me back, said Bobby Robson, as he took his seat on the dais in Lisbon. Robson was wearing two hats. First, he had been invited to impart his wisdom to the assembled coaches, referees, officials and media with all the status afforded the coach of Portuguese champions, FC Porto. Then he wore another hat as the man who took England to the World Cup finals twice, including the 1990 semi-finals.

Robson's role is now that of elder stateman, dispensing his World Cup wisdom — which he did with charm and humour, particularly when warning Switzerland coach Roy Hodgson of the "baby-sitting" challenge awaiting him in the US.

Robson said: "You have a squad of 22 young men. They're fit, good-looking, healthy and with plenty of money . . . they're a problem!"

Off stage, Robson had some cool words of advice for new England coach Terry Venables. Robson said: "I can tell him this: there are no short cuts. He will have to make his own decsions and he has to find the working method which suits him. He must be free to make his own mistakes because, unfortunately in this life, we often learn more from the things we get wrong than the things we get right."

Robson, looking back, has made no secret of the fact that he needed up to two years to adjust to the pace of the England job. He said: "As a club manager, if you lose 5-0 on Saturday, you have a chance to put it right a few days later. But, as national manager, if you lose you have to carry the weight of it for a month or more until your next game."

The gap between international dates provides more complications in terms of team-building. Venables will be working towards the 1996 European Championship but, listening to Robson, it is clear he must capitalise on every date he can squeeze into the next two years.

Robson said: "It may sound odd but the very number of good players can be disconcerting to a manager fresh out of the club game. For example, if you have three top-class left backs to choose between. That's tough because, at your club, you have been used to making do with the players you've been stuck with."

Withstanding the media barrage is something else on which Venables must set his mind. Robson added: "The media throw all manner of players' names at you — maybe names you hadn't thought of. You start thinking: 'Well, maybe he's worth a look.' However, it's no good letting anyone else pick your team for you.

"You are the one who will get the stick if things go wrong, not the guy in the paper or on television. He'll probably be first in line to criticise.

"So Terry should, at least, make sure that he stands or falls on his own decisions. In other words: be your own man!"

French follies

WHITHER French football? Not in the wake of World Cup failure. That was merely a result of a couple of defeats by Israel and Bulgaria which, with due respect, can happen to anyone.

The issue which concerns me centres on the general health of the French game.

France is one of the world's leading nations. Its administrators have been among the great pioneers — Jules Rimet, Henri Delaunay, etc — and their players — Raymond Kopa, Just Fontaine, Michel Platini, etc — have contributed great skill and enterprise at the highest levels of play. Now the French game is frozen not so much in a time warp as in a corruption warp from which there appears no escape.

Where did it start to go wrong?

In the early 1980s France woke up to football's potential as an ideal vehicle to conduct the fusion of interests between TV, business and politics. France, perhaps, was peculiarly vulnerable because of the role local politicians were able to take through loan support in their local clubs.

Originally such measures had been undertaken to rescue the French professional game when it went into financial free-fall in the 1960s. But the long-term result has been morally disastrous.

Also, businessmen seeking to promote their companies invested heavily in sponsorship of clubs, seeking the high public profile which was increasingly available in return through TV.

So far, so good. But that brought its own pressure. To justify such investments demanded success. Men who thought nothing of investing millions of Francs in commercial self-publicity saw nothing wrong in spending a few hundred or a few thousand more to persuade a handful of referees and players to help achieve their ends.

Shambles . . . French football is in a mess.

From that point, it was but a short step to the sort of systemised corruption which has been revealed by the various judicial inquiries which, over the past decade, have uncovered scandals involving Saint Etienne, Bordeaux and Marseille.

Currently, the French Federation is in disarray. Long-serving president Jean Fournet-Fayard quit and former UEFA president Jacques Georges took over once more in a caretaker capacity. Simultaneously, FIFA reminded the FFF that a final resolution is still awaited in the Valenciennes-Marseille case (last summer's suspensions and assorted other penalties were merely interim measures).

Indeed, FIFA general secretary Sepp Blatter went as far as to suggest that the player suspensions might now be lifted pending a permanent resolution.

The financial interests of football, big business and television are now so confusingly entangled in France that no obvious solution is in sight. And without sound, independent direction from the top, what hope is there further down the game?

France's presence at the 1992 European Championship finals may prove to have been their last appearance in the international limelight for a very long time.

Nigeria look the best bet

AFRICAN soccer's showpiece, the Nations Cup, gives Nigeria a chance to confirm their growing image on the continent.

The Nigerians, on paper, are the best team in Africa, having waltzed through their opposition over the past 24 months and, more importantly, earned themselves a berth at US '94.

But in the past the Super Eagles have been unable to turn qualifying form into championship-winning football and have only won the Nations Cup once, as hosts in 1980.

In Senegal two years ago they were third, as favourites, but their upcoming World Cup appearance should give them a sharp change in fortune.

Firstly, Nigerian players know that success in the African Nations Cup will guarantee them squad places for the US.

Coach Clemens Westerhof, able to choose from more than 40 European-based professionals, has an almost unlimited supply of talent waiting should the side selected for Tunisia prove ineffective.

There is huge domestic pressure from the Nigerian populace for success in a tournament where there have been many past disappointments.

This time, with the skill and overwhelming physical force of Rachidi Yekini, leading scorer in Senegal in 1992, Victor Ikpeba, Daniel Amokachi and the emerging midfielder Augustine Okocha, the public should be satisfied.

Their toughest challenges are likely to come from the hosts, Tunisia, and 1992 finalists, Ghana.

Tunisia will be a force, having put in professional preparation against mainly European opposition. They have drawn with a full-strength Dutch team and with world champions Germany, and beat Bulgaria and Iceland.

Ghana, losers in a penalty shoot-out in the last final against Ivory Coast, have Anthony Yeboah back after his knee injury, plus captain Abedi Pele, who was a 17-year-old substitute when Ghana last won the Cup, in Libya in 1982, but sat out the final in Senegal after a second caution in the semi-final win over Nigeria.

He owes his team-mates for that indiscretion and, supported by the likes of Nii Lamptey and Prince Polley, could make up in dramatic fashion.

Zambia, the only southern African representatives, will be the sentimental favourites of many having made a remarkable recovery since the Gabon air-crash a year ago.

MARK GLEESON

AFRICAN NATIONS CUP FINALS — TUNISIA 1994

THE GROUPS

A: Tunisia (hosts), Mali, Zaire
B: Egypt, Gabon, Nigeria
C: Ivory Coast (holders), Sierra Leone, Zambia
D: Ghana, Guinea, Senegal

● *For fixtures, see What's On (p 48).*

AFRICAN NATIONS CUP

Previous winners and venues

1957 .....Egypt .....(Sudan)
1959 .....Egypt .....(Egypt)
1962 .....Ethiopia .....(Ethiopia)
1963 .....Ghana .....(Ghana)
1965 .....Ghana .....(Tunisia)
1968 .....Zaire .....(Ethiopia)
1970 .....Ghana .....(Sudan)
1972 .....Congo .....(Cameroon)
1974 .....Zaire .....(Egypt)
1976 .....Morocco .....(Ethiopia)
1978 .....Ghana .....(Ghana)
1980 .....Nigeria .....(Nigeria)
1982 .....Ghana .....(Libya)
1984 .....Cameroon .....(Ivory Coast)
1986 .....Egypt .....(Egypt)
1988 .....Cameroon .....(Morocco)
1990 .....Algeria .....(Algeria)
1992 .....Ivory Coast .....(Senegal)

THE NATIONS CUP RECORDS . . . COUNTRY BY COUNTRY

Egypt (13) — 1957 (winners), 1959 (winners), 1962 (runners-up), 1963, 1970, 1974, 1976, 1980, 1984, 1986 (winners), 1988, 1990, 1992.

P	W	D	L	F	A
48	24	8	16	80	57

Ghana (9) — 1963 (winners), 1965 (winners), 1968 (runners-up), 1970 (runners-up), 1978 (winners), 1980, 1982 (winners), 1984, 1992 (runners-up).

P	W	D	L	F	A
37	22	10	5	60	32

Guinea (4) — 1970, 1974, 1976 (runners-up).

P	W	D	L	F	A
15	4	7	4	22	23

Ivory Coast (10) — 1965, 1968, 1970, 1974, 1980, 1984, 1986, 1988, 1990, 1992.

P	W	D	L	F	A
38	14	9	15	49	43

Mali (1) — 1972 (runners-up).

P	W	D	L	F	A
5	1	3	1	11	11

Nigeria (9) — 1963, 1976, 1978, 1980 (winners), 1982, 1984 (runners-up), 1988 (runners-up), 1990 (runners-up), 1992.

P	W	D	L	F	A
40	18	10	12	57	53

Senegal (4) — 1965, 1986, 1990, 1992.

P	W	D	L	F	A
14	5	3	6	15	9

Tunisia (5) — 1962,1963, 1965 (runners-up), 1978, 1982.

P	W	D	L	F	A
14	3	5	6	19	19

Zaire (8) — 1965, 1968 (winners), 1970, 1972, 1974 (winners), 1976, 1988, 1992.

P	W	D	L	F	A
30	9	9	12	46	49

Zambia (6) — 1974 (runners-up), 1978, 1982,1986, 1990, 1992.

P	W	D	L	F	A
25	11	4	10	25	22

● *Gabon and Sierra Leone have not appeared in any previous finals.*

1994 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP — *possible squads*

EGYPT

Ahmed Shoubier .....G .....Al Ahly
Eid El Sayed .....G .....Zamalek
Hussein Abdellatif .....D .....Zamalek
Fawzy Garnal .....D .....Ismaillia
Ibrahim Hassan .....D .....Al Ahly (Saudi)
Ashraf Kacem .....D .....Al Ahly (Saudi)
Nabil Mahmoud .....D .....Zamalek
Hany Ramzy .....D ...Neutchatel Xamax (Swi)
Hesham Yaken .....D .....Zamalek
Reda Abdelsal .....M .....Zamalek
Hady Khashba .....M .....Al Ahly (Saudi)
Ayman Mansour .....M .....Zamalek
Osama Oraby .....M .....Al Ahly (Saudi)
Ahmed Ramzy .....M .....Zamalek
Ismail Youssel .....M .....Zamalek
Hossam Hassan .....F .....Al Ahly (Saudi)
Yaser Rayan .....F .....Al Ahly (Saudi)
Mohamed Saleh .....F .....Al Ahly (Saudi)
Magdi Tolba .....F .....Levski Sofia (Bul)
Coach: Taha Ismail

GABON

Germain Mendrome .....G .....AS Sogara
Armel Rolenga .....G .....Shell FC
Francois Amegasse .....D .....Shell FC
Tristan Mombo .....D .....Shell FC
Francois Moumba .....D .....Delta FC
Parfait Ndong Nguema ....D .....Shell FC
Guy Nzeng .....D .....AS Sogara
Thierry Retna .....D .....AS Sogara
Issa Adji .....M .....Shell FC
Pierre Aubameyang .....M .....Le Havre (Fra)
Sylvain Kassa .....M .....Shell FC
Etienna Kassa Ngona .....M .....AS Sogara
Jean-Martin Mouloungui ..M .....Shell FC
Jean-Daniel Ndong-Nze ..M .....Petrosport
Valery Ondo .....M .....Shell FC
Brice Makaya .....F .....Petrosport
Regis Manon .....F .....ASMO
Albin Mboungha-Bze .....F .....ASMO
Guy-Roger Nzamba .....F .....Mulhouse (Fra)
James Ogandaga .....F .....Petrosport
Coach: Jean Thissen (Bel)

GHANA

Edward Ansah .....G .....Asante Kotoko
Abubakari Damba .....G .....Great Olympics
Sammy Adjei .....D .....Goldfields
Emannuel Armah .....D .....Hearts of Oak
Isaac Agare .....D .....Anderlecht (Bel)
Tony Baffoe .....D .....FC Metz (Fra)
Afo Dodoo .....D .....Great Olympics
Frimpong Manso .....D .....Asante Kotoko
Yaw Acheampong .....M .....Goldfields
Adejetey Adjei .....M .....Goldfields
Abedi Pele Ayew .....M .....Lyon (Fra)
Ali Ibrahim Perle .....M .....Wattenscheid (Ger)
Nii Lamptey Odartey .....M .....PSV Eindhoven (Hol)
Alexander Opoku .....M .....VfB Leipzig (Ger)
Sharno Quaye .....M .....Hearts of Oak
Charles Akkunor .....F .....Koln (Ger)
Kwane Ayey .....F .....Lecce (Ita)
Prince Polley Opuku .....F .....FC Twente (Hol)
Yaw Preko .....F .....Anderlecht (Bel)
Anthony Yeboah .....F .....Ein. Frankfurt (Ger)
Coach: Aggrey Fynn

GUINEA

Fode Laye Carnara .....G .....Horoya
Saliou Diallo .....G .....Hafia Conakry
Abdoul Karim Bangoura...D .....Bastia (Fra)
Ousame Fernandez .....D .....ASFAG
Morlaye Soumah .....D .....Valenciennes (Fra)
Edgar Barabara Sylla .....D .....No club
Mohamed Ophei Sylla.....D .....Vannes FC (Fra)
Thierno Barry .....D .....Marseille (Fra)
Sekou Oumar Drame .....M .....Horoya
Lansane Soumah .....M .....Hoogstraten (Bel)
Ousame Soumah .....M .....Bastia (Fra)
Abdou Salam Sow .....M .....Kortrijk (Bel)
Mohamed Sylla .....M ....Willem II Tilburg (Hol)
Fabio Thiam .....M .....FC Cologne (Ger)
Sekou Toure .....M .....Valenciennes (Fra)
Aboubacar Camara .....F .....St Etienne (Fra)
Fode Camara .....F .....St Nicholas (Bel)
Taifour Diane .....F .....Colorado Foxes (US)
Soulemane Oulare .....F .....Beveren (Bel)
Sekou Soumah .....F ....Willem II Tilburg (Hol)
Coach: Boro Primorac (Fra)

IVORY COAST

Alain Gouamene .....G .....ASEC Abidjan
Losseni Konate .....G .....ASEC Abidjan
Sam Dominque Abouo....D .....ASEC Abidjan
Basile Aka Kouame .....D .....ASEC Abidjan
Jean-Marie Gbahou .....D .....ASEC Abidjan
Arsene Hobou .....D .....Africa Sport
Georges Nagueu Lignon ..D .....Africa Sport
Diaby Sekana .....D ....Louhans-Cuiseaux (Fra)
Sob Evariste Dibo .....M .....Ajaccio (Fra)
Villasco Fallet .....M .....ASEC Abidjan
Ibrahim Kone .....M .....Africa Sport
Serge-Alain Maguy .....M .....At. Madrid (Spa)
Didier Otokore .....M .....Cannes (Fra)
Donald Sie .....M .....ASEC Abidjan
Moussa Traore .....M .....Ales (Fra)
Sekou Barnba .....F .....ASEC Abidjan
Tcherossoa Guel .....F .....ASEC Abidjan
Ahmed Ouattara .....F .....Africa Sport
Joel Tiehi .....F .....Le Havre (Fra)
Abdoulaye Traore .....F .....ASEC Abdijan
Coach: Henryk Kasperczak (Pol)

MALI

Ousmane Farota .....G .....Stade Malien
Kararnoko Keita .....G .....Garges
Koureissey Camara .....D .....Djoliba
Dramana Dambale .....D .....Djoliba
Moussa Kone .....D .....Djoliba
Sekou Sangane .....D .....Auxerre (Fra)
Abdoul Karim Sidibe .....D .....Djoliba
Brehima Traore .....D .....AS Mande
Fernand Coulibaly .....M .....Al Ahly (Saudi)
Djibril Diawara .....M .....Le Mans (Fra)
Oumar Guindo .....M .....Djoliba
Makan Keita .....M .....Djoliba
Moussa Dougoutigui Keita ...M .....US Sidi Kacem (Alg)
Soumaili Traore .....F ...Raja Casablanca (Mor)
Ousmane Soumane .....F .....Zarnalek (Egy)
Demba Ndiaye .....F .....Rousse (Fra)
Ousmane Doumbia .....F .....Noisy le Grand (Fra)
Bassala Toure .....F .....KAC Marrakesh (Mor)
Coach: Mamadou Keita

NIGERIA

Wilfred Agbonavare .....G ..Rayo Vallencano (Spa)
Alloy Agu .....G .....FC Liege (Bel)
Peter Rufai .....G .....GA Eagles (Hol)
Austin Eguaoen .....D .....Kortrijk (Bel)
Ben Iorha .....D ....Vitesse Arnhem (Hol)
Stephen Keshi .....D....RWD Molenbeek (Bel)
Chidi Nwanu .....D .....Anderlecht (Nig)
Uche Okechukwu .....D .....Fenerbache (Tur)
Mutiu Adepoju .....M ..Racing Santander (Spa)
Emmanuel Amunike .....M .....Zamalek (Egy)
Victor Ikpeba .....M .....Monaco (Fra)
Augustine Okocha .....M .....Ein. Frankfurt (Ger)
Thompson Oliha .....M .....Africa Sports (IC)
Sunday Oliseh .....M .....FC Liege (Bel)
Daniel Amokachi .....F .....FC Brugge (Bel)
Chris Armstrong .....F .....Crystal Palace (Eng)
Efan Ekoku .....F .....Norwich City (Eng)
George Finidi .....F .....Ajax (Hol)
Samson Siasia .....F .....Nantes (Fra)
Rachidi Yekini .....F .....Vitoria Setubal (Por)
Coach: Clemens Westerhof (Hol)

SENEGAL

Papa Waly Ndiane .....G .....Jeanne d'Arc
Sy Ousmane .....G .....Port Autonome
Adama Cisse .....D .....Club Africain (Tun)
Ali Male .....D .....Jeanne d'Arc
Mamadou Marieme Diallo ..D .....Port Autonome
Adolphe Mendy .....D .....ASC Ndimabour
Roger Mendy .....D .....Pescara (Ita)
Issa Tambedou .....D .....Port Autonome
Mansour Ayando .....M .....Diaraf Dakar
Victor Diagne .....M .....Ekeren (Bel)
Mamadou Diallo .....M....KAC Marrakesh (Mor)
Youlousse Diop .....M .....Etics
Mamadou Kane .....M .....Beauvais (Fra)
Mame Mangane .....M .....Diaraf Dakar
Lamine Sagns .....M .....Diaraf Dakar
Moussa Badiane .....F .....Diaraf Dakar
Salif Keita .....F .....Beveren (Belm)
Moussa Ndaw .....F .....El Hilal (Saudi)
Soulemane Sane .....F .....Wattenscheid (Ger)
Alassane Seck .....F .....AS Douanes
Coach: Jules Bocande

SIERRA LEONE

Osaio Marah .....G .....Beerschot (Bel)
Sam Moses .....G .....East End Lions
Lamine Conteh .....D .....Beerschot (Bel)
Aruna Kailie .....D .....FC Boom (Bel)
Abubakar Kamara .....D .....East End Lions
Mohamed Kanu .....D .....FC Helekgem (Bel)
Amadu Deen Kuruma .....D .....East End Lions
Mohamed Mansareh .....D .....Beerschot (Bel)
Yusuf Bangura .....M .....RC Genk (Bel)
Kernokai Kallon .....M .....AS Kaloum (Gui)
Mussa Kallon .....M ..Racing Bafoussam (Cam)
Abu Kanu .....M .....East End Lions
Brima Koller .....M .....AS Kaloum (Gui)
Ibrahim Koroma .....M .....FC Boom (Bel)
John Sama .....M .....Al Ittifaq (Saudi)
Leslie Allen .....F .....FC Mbilinga (Gab)
Sidique Manasaray .....F .....RC Genk (Bel)
Gbassay John Sessay .....F .....Vitoria Setubal (Por)
John Ajina Sessay .....F .....FC Mbilinga (Gab)
Rashin Wurie .....F .....Beerschot (Bel)
Coach: Mohamed Mustapha Abdelghali (Egy)

TUNISIA

Chokri El Ouaer .....G .....Esperance
Naceur Bedoui .....G .....Esperance
Sami Ben Neji .....D .....Esperance
Khaled Benyahia .....D .....Esperance
Taoufik Hickheri .....D ..Vitoria Guimaraes (Por)
Taoufik M'Hedhebi .....D .....Stade Tunisien
Ahmed Mizouri .....D .....ES Sahel
Mourad El Okbi .....D...Al Ahly Jeddah (Saudi)
Tarek Thabet .....D .....Esperance
Raouf Bouzaiene .....M .....Laval (Fra)
Mourad Gharbi .....M .....CA Bizerte
Jamel Limam .....M .....Stade Tunisien
Mohamed Ali Mahjoubi ..M .....Esperance
Mohamed Mhadebi .....M .....Stade Tunisien
Lofti Rouissi .....M .....Club Africain
Sami Nasri .....M .....Club Africain
Amor Ben Taher .....F .....OC Kerkennah
Ayedi Hamrouni .....F .....Esperance
Nabil Maaloul .....F .....Al Ahly (Saudi)
Faouzi Rouissi .....F .....Caen (Fra)
Abedi Sellimi .....F .....Club Africain
Hamed Ziad Tlemcani .....F ..Vitoria Guimaraes (Por)
Coach: Youssef Zouaoui

ZAIRE

Nzamungili Bable .....G .....Union Bilbombe
Tomisi Diankolo .....G .....Orlando Pirates (SA)
Nduana Bapupa .....D .....KV Ostende (Bel)
Kabwe Kasango .....D .....Lubumbashi Sport
Epangela Lokose .....D .....Vita Club
Kassango Mackonga .....D .....TP Mazembe
Mbaki Makengo .....D .....RJ Wavre (Belg)
Shokoto Sisi .....D .....DC Motema Pembe
Mbala Balenga .....M .....Gent (Bel)
Okita Katschi .....M .....DC Motema Pembe
Selenge Kibonge .....M .....Vita Club
Kalenga Ndiaye .....M .....Jomo Cosmo (SA)
Mbote Ndinga .....M ...Vitoria Guimaraes (Por)
Kimonekele Nganzadei ...M .....FC Lommel (Bel)
Ngwengwe Yoko .....M .....DC Motema Pembe
Ndombasi Kiamba .....F .....Mikishi Sport
Menama Lukaku .....F .....FC Boom (Bel)
Saidi Tshindaye Masudi ..F .....DC Motema Pembe
Kona Ngole .....F .....Genclerbirligi (Tur)
Ekanza Sima .....F .....Vita Club
Coach: Kalala Mukendi

ZAMBIA

James Phiri .....G .....Zanaco
Shadrack Biemba .....G .....Amazule (SA)
Hector Chilombo .....D .....Dynamos (SA)
Tenant Chilumba .....D .....Kabwe Warriors
Aggrey Chiyangi .....D .....Power Dynamos
Harrison Chongo .....D .....Mufulira Wanderers
Elijah Litana .....D .....Power Dynamos
Kapambwe Mulenga .....D .....Nkana FC
Evans Sakala .....D .....Chatsworth Ran (SA)
John Lungu .....M .....Roan United
Linos Makwaza .....M .....Power Dynamos
Emmanuel Munaile .....M .....Chatsworth Ran (SA)
Joel Bwalya .....M .....Harelbeke (Bel)
Douglas Mwamba .....M .....Brondby (Den)
Jonson Bwalya .....M .....FC Bulle (Swi)
Kalusha Bwalya .....M .....PSV Eindhoven (Hol)
Kenneth Malitoli .....F .....Esperance (Tun)
Gibby Mbasela .....F .....Esperance (Tun)
Maybin Mugaiwa .....F ...Raja Casablanca (Mor)
Stone Nyirenda .....F .....Izegem (Bel)
Wedson Nyirenda .....F .....Kaizer Chiefs (SA)
Ackson Shimbala .....F .....Orlando Pirates (SA)
Coach: Ian Porterfield (Sco)

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Three day tour (Sat 30 April — Mon 2 May 1994)

★ A star-studded fixture, featuring Gullit, Mancini, Lombardo, Boksic, Doll, Signori, plus, of course, England's David Platt and Paul Gascoigne.

Sampdoria should still have their eye on the Scudetto they last won three years ago; either way, both clubs will be pushing for a place in Europe so there will be no shortage of commitment.

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BY PADDY AGNEW

A bullet for Bagnoli

THESE are hard times for Internazionale fans. A season that began with the highest of hopes — even London bookmakers installed Inter as title favourites last August — reached a distinctly low ebb in February when experienced coach Osvaldo Bagnoli was sacked.

A 2-1 home defeat by Lazio was the straw that finally broke Bagnoli's contract.

President Ernesto Pellegrini dismissed Bagnoli the next day, replacing him with the club's youth team coach, Giampiero Marini, familiar to many, of course, as a member of Italy's 1982 World Cup-winning side in Spain.

Pellegrini attempted to limit the damages to Bagnoli by publicly expressing his "respect" for his sacked coach, but insisted that given recent disappointing results (including league defeats by Atalanta and Parma and an Italian Cup elimination by Sampdoria), he had no option but to ring the changes.

Of Marini, Pellegrini commented: "I've a lot of confidence in him and I'm sure that he'll do well."

That confidence was immediately put to the test when Inter lost their first game under Marini, beaten 2-1 away by relegation battlers Piacenza.

In their next outing, a 0-0 home draw with Napoli, Inter managed to play even less impressively.

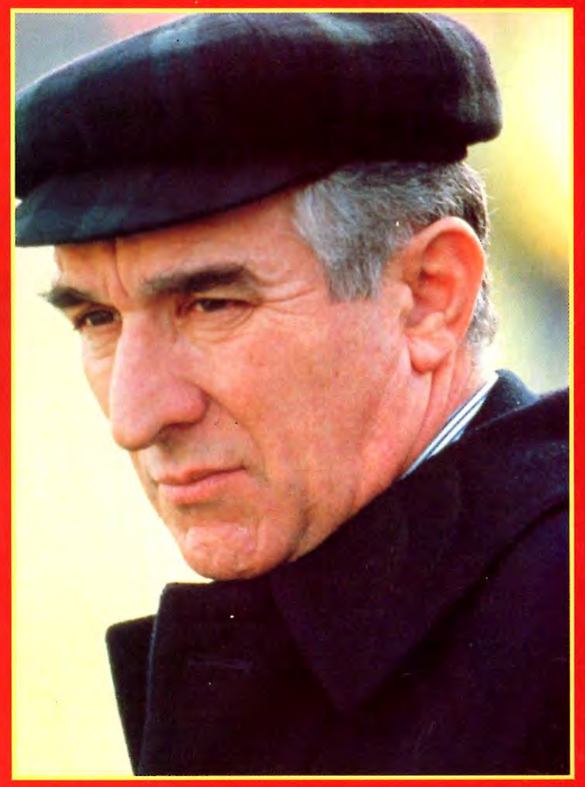
Bagnoli is the sixth Italian First Division coach to get the sack this season, following Gigi Radice (Cagliari), Adriano Fedele (Udinese), Francesco Guidolin (Atalanta), Nedo Sonetti (Lecce) and Claudio Maselli (Genoa).

In his case, even more than the others, it appears that the coach has been sacrificed to atone for the shortcomings of others.

Even though media comment focussed heavily on Bagnoli's inability to weld together the talents of Dutchmen Dennis Bergkamp and Wim Jonk, Russian striker Igor Shalimov and former Udinese player Francesco Dell'Anno, the source of Bagnoli's troubles was to be found elsewhere.

Long-term injuries to key midfielders Nicola Berti and Alessandro Bianchi did not help, nor did recurrent goalkeeping errors by Walter Zenga or the loss of form by Giuseppe Bergomi and Riccardo Ferri.

These three form something of a seemingly untouchable "old guard"



Experienced . . . Giuseppe Bergomi (top left) and Walter Zenga (left) form something of an "Old Guard" at Inter, but their failures on the pitch have cost coach Bagnoli (below left) his job.

at Inter. Bergomi, however, is no longer the player of World Cup fame of 12 years ago, while the duration and success of both Zenga and Ferri at the highest level always has been a mystery.

There were even those who suggested a couple of seasons ago that Zenga was the "best goalkeeper in the world".

Everyone is entitled to an opinion, but, in truth, both Ferri and Zenga are, at their best, modest players, capable between them of losing Italy the 1990 World Cup when they failed to deal with little Claudio Caniggia coming in to score that all important equaliser for Argentina in the Naples semi-final.

It is frankly difficult to see how Marini can do better than Bagnoli, a serious coach whose past triumphs include leading Verona to a championship title in 1985 as well as masterminding Genoa's UEFA Cup run two seasons ago, during which they eliminated Liverpool.

Marini can but hope for further success in the UEFA Cup with which to "save" the Inter season.

While Inter struggle, their city rivals, Milan, have been continuing on their majestic way. Just after the champions had defeated Lazio 1-0 in Rome, former Lazio star Giorgio Chinaglia was telling *ITV Television* just what the victory meant, saying: "The championship is over. Milan have a six-point lead with just ten games to go. Nothing will stop them now"

Curiously enough, Chinaglia is one of many Italian observers less than sure about Milan's Champions Cup chances.

He believes the Italian champions will get into the Champions Cup final all right, but he also thinks they may well lose that final because of their chronic scoring difficulties.

Milan 1993-94 become ever more like their coach, Fabio Capello, and ever more different from the sparkling Sacchi-coached side who won two Champions Cups in 1989 and 1990.

After 24 days of this season, Milan had conceded only eight goals, while they had scored 27.

By comparison, the goal figures for their major rivals show Juventus (41-21), Sampdoria (48-31) and Parma (38-20) all scoring AND conceding more.

At Milanello these days it would seem that traditional Italian methods, beginning and ending with a strong defence, are best.

Not for nothing, it is Sampdoria of the above mentioned who have scored most goals.

That man Ruud Gullit continues to dumbfound everyone, with vital Italian Cup goals against Internazionale and Parma to take Sampdoria into the final against Second Division Ancona (who beat Torino 1-0 on aggregate in the semi-finals), while continuing to score in the league.

Sampdoria's good form prompted their English midfielder David Platt to comment recently: "Sampdoria are certainly the best side I've ever played in . . . but only Milan themselves can lose the championship, while we have got to keep on winning game after game". Indeed.

For Sampdoria, Parma, Juventus and Internazionale, it would seem that the season can offer only the compensation of Cup success, be it the Italian Cup, or one of the two remaining European competitions — the UEFA Cup or the Cup-winners Cup.

For Lazio, another one-time pretender to the Milan throne, the season can offer a position in next year's UEFA Cup and the gratifying knowledge (finally!) that Englishman Paul Gascoigne was definitely worth waiting for.

As the season progresses and Gascoigne belatedly gets fitter, his contribution to the Roman side becomes ever more crucial.

But, after Lazio's loss to Milan, a game during which Lazio played by far their best soccer of the season in a torrid first half, even Gascoigne had to concede: "Milan have won the title. They're better than all the others and that's that"

RESULTS

SERIE A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Milan	24	15	8	1	27	8	38
Juventus	24	11	10	3	41	21	32
Sampdoria	24	14	4	5	47	29	32
Parma	24	13	5	6	38	20	31
Lazio	24	11	7	6	34	25	29
Inter	24	9	8	6	33	23	26
Napoli	24	8	9	6	33	25	25
Torino	24	8	9	7	30	25	25
Foggia	24	7	11	6	33	29	25
Cagliari	24	7	9	8	31	39	23
Piacenza	24	7	8	9	22	33	22
Roma	24	5	12	7	20	24	22
Cremonese	24	7	7	10	27	30	21
Udinese	24	5	9	10	20	32	19
Genoa	24	4	11	9	17	30	19
Reggiana	24	5	8	11	17	28	18
Atalanta	24	4	8	12	23	43	16
Lecce	24	2	5	16	17	38	9

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, JANUARY 23

WEEKEND

MILAN 2 (Massaro 72, Papin 76)
PIACENZA 0. **Att:** 55,000.

SAMPDORIA 1 (Lombardo 28 pen)
JUVENTUS 1 (Ravanelli 81). **Att:** 40,000.

PARMA 2 (Di Chiara 2, Asprilla 89)
LAZIO 0. **Att:** 27,000.

CREMONESE 1 (Gualco 51)
INTER 4 (Jonk 20, 25, A. Paganin 42, Sosa 80). **Att:** 15,000.

TORINO 1 (B. Carbone 51)
NAPOLI 1 (Fonseca 72 pen). **Att:** 25,000.

FOGGIA 5 (Cappellini 12, 47, Caini 57, P. Bresciani 75, Stroppa 92 pen)
LECCE 0. **Att:** 16,000.

AS ROMA 0
UDINESE 2 (Pizzi 25, Branca 39). **Att:** 45,000.

CAGLIARI 0
GENOA 0. **Att:** 20,000.

REGGIANA 3 (L. De Agostini 6, De Paola 44 og, Lantignotti 57)
ATALANTA 0. **Att:** 20,000.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

MIDWEEK

ITALIAN CUP — QUARTER-FINALS, 2ND LEG

PARMA 6 (Brolin 15, 75, Zola 41, Sorce 77 pen, Di Chiara 82, Matrecano 90)
FOGGIA 1 (Stroppa 56). **Att:** 8,719.
Parma won 9-1 on agg

ANCONA 2 (Vecchiola 14, 76)
VENEZIA 0. **Att:** 6,786.
Ancona won 2-0 on agg

TORINO 2 (Sinigaglia 17, Venturin 89)
PIACENZA 1 (Piovani 45). **Att:** 6,886.
Torino won 4-3 on agg

INTER 1 (Fontolan 70)
SAMPDORIA 1 (Gullit). **Att:** 25,000.
Sampdoria won 2-1 on agg

WEEKEND

ATALANTA 0
MILAN 1 (Massaro 55). **Att:** 30,000.

JUVENTUS 2 (Ravanelli 69, R. Baggio 79)
FOGGIA 0. **Att:** 45,000.

SAMPDORIA 3 (Vierchowod 53, Ceramicola 85 og, Mancini 92)
LECCE 0. *(At Bari — San Nicola)*. **Att:** 1,000.

GENOA 0
PARMA 4 (Zola 43, 92, Brolin 45, Asprilla 86 pen). **Att:** 30,000

INTER 3 (Sosa 43, 52, Fontolan 90)
CAGLIARI 3 (Oliveira 6, Pusceddu 18, Dely Valdes 85). **Att:** 45,000.

LAZIO 4 (Cravero 15, Casiraghi 34, Signori 66, 74)
CREMONESE 2 (Cristiani 24, Bergodi 91 og). **Att:** 40,000.

NAPOLI 1 (Fonseca 90 pen)
AS ROMA 1 (Balbo 58 pen). **Att:** 45,000.

UDINESE 1 (Branca 85 pen)
TORINO 1 (Francescoli 77). **Att:** 15,000.

PIACENZA 3 (Iacobelli 47, L. De Agostini 62 og, Moretti 89)
REGGIANA 2 (Papais 8 og, Morello 72). **Att:** 16,000.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6

WEEKEND

AS ROMA 0
MILAN 2 (Massaro 11, Maldini 77). **Att:** 60,000.

SAMPDORIA 6 (Platt 9, Jugovic 20 pen, 30, R. Mancini 51, 69 pen, Amoruso 61)
UDINESE 2 (Pizzi 52, Desideri 57). **Att:** 25,000.

TORINO 1 (Francescoli 54)
PARMA 2 (Apolloni 27, D. Fortunato 53 og). **Att:** 25,000.

REGGIANA 0
JUVENTUS 0. **Att:** 14,000.

INTER 1 (Sosa 25)
LAZIO 2 (Signori 86 pen, Di Matteo 91). **Att:** 43,000.

NAPOLI 1 (Di Canio 72 pen)
GENOA 1 (Van't Schip 46). **Att:** 35,000.

CAGLIARI 1 (Oliveira 16)
FOGGIA 1 (Sciacca 34). **Att:** 15,000.

CREMONESE 2 (Codispoti 68 og, Maspero 78)
ATALANTA 0. **Att:** 8,500.

LECCE 1 (Russo 51)
PIACENZA 1 (Brioschi 79). **Att:** 6,400.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13

WEEKEND

MILAN 1 (Simone 63)
CREMONESE 0. **Att:** 60,000.

JUVENTUS 5 (Moller 2, Marocchi 24, Ravanelli 26, 66, R. Baggio 51)
LECCE 1 (K. Ayew 60). **Att:** 20,000.

PARMA 2 (Minotti 74, Zola 94)
SAMPDORIA 1 (Jugovic 28). **Att:** 28,000.

LAZIO 4 (Signori 24 pen, 51, 64, Gascoigne 88)
CAGLIARI 0. **Att:** 45,000.

PIACENZA 2 (Orlando 13 og, Turrini 52)
INTER 1 (S. Battistini 47). **Att:** 17,000.

UDINESE 3 (Branca 63, 86, Calori 66)
NAPOLI 1 (Pecchia 62). **Att:** 16,000.

FOGGIA 1 (Esposito 40 og)
REGGIANA 0. **Att:** 19,000.

GENOA 1 (Vink 35)
TORINO 1 (Cois 67). **Att:** 27,000.

ATALANTA 1 (Saurini 80)
AS ROMA 1 (Balbo 24). **Att:** 20,000.

On target . . . Gascoigne scores for Lazio against Cagliari.

SPAIN

BY GRAHAM TURNER

Keepers in contrast . . . Santiago Canizares (left) and Andoni Zubizarreta (below).

HOT and COLD

Barca go to both extremes

BARCELONA and coach Johan Cruyff seem to be suffering from soccer's equivalent of the greenhouse effect. The extremes of climate have been drastic.

After the 5-0 win over Real — the first at home since 1945 — they managed one victory in eight games.

They failed to score in three hours against Second Division Betis, and a mix-up between Ronald Koeman and goalkeeper Carlos Busquets (for motives behind Andoni Zubizarreta's exclusion, apply to Cruyff) allowed Juanito, a striker on loan from Deportivo La Coruna, to bundle them out of the Spanish Cup.

Barca then lost 3-2 to Athletic Bilbao, and out came the record books to prove it was the first time they had had consecutive defeats in the Nou Camp since Cruyff's arrival in 1988.

To show it was no fluke, Barca travelled to Zaragoza and, in front of the first capacity crowd in La Romareda for five years, were trounced 6-3 and could have conceded 10. Er . . . let's see, that was the first time they had conceded six since 6-2 in Valencia, November 1962.

They then took on tail-enders Osasuna, who had two men sent off, conceded three penalties and lost 8-1. Here we go again . . . first time Barcelona had scored eight since October 1964.

Such a roller-coaster run had Cruyff's stomach churning. After the Cup exit he announced that Barcelona had reached the end of an era and that it was time to reach for the new broom.

The players promptly asked him to vacate the dressing-room while they held a two-hour crisis meeting.

The next two defeats allowed Deportivo to build a six-point advantage but, worse still, Cruyff and all the fans who had spent much of the season dancing on Real Madrid's grave woke up on Monday morning to find the ghost team one point ahead.

As the crisis hit rock-bottom, Cruyff suddenly produced what he thought was a carrot: "If we win the League and the Champions Cup, all players whose contracts expire in June will have them automatically renewed for one year."

All very nice for the bank balances of Zubizarreta (32), Juan Carlos (29), Eusebio (30), Laudrup (30), Salinas (31) and even Koeman (31) and Bakero (31) who may be approaching their sell-by date even though they have one more year to run on their contracts.

Their ages, by the way, refer to the end of the season. But some might prefer to take a cut in pay just to avoid Cruyff's shillelagh.

Barcelona have begun to scour the European market for reinforcements, while their domestic shopping list is headed by Jose Luis Caminero (Atletico Madrid), Fran (Deportivo), Julen Guerrero and Ander Garitano (Bilbao), Victor Alkiza (Real Sociedad) and Juanele (Gijon).

None is going cheap and the Barcelona president, Josep Lluis Nunez, has again crossed swords with Cruyff by telling him that only around £5million is available. The answer might be to sell in order to buy and Cruyff's list could begin with Hristo Stoichkov and Ronald Koeman. Watch this space.

Having offered his players the contractual carrot, Cruyff turned his cudgel on the media.

"How dare you talk about us signing Santiago Canizares on the day after Zubi has let in six goals for the first time in his career?" he railed during the Zaragoza post-mortem. "It is irresponsible and unkind."

Celta, where Canizares plays, promptly announced that they had been expecting Barca emissaries that week. One wonders exactly who was being unkind and irresponsible.

Barcelona's negotiators never did arrive in Vigo. They and Deportivo, also checking on 24-year-old Canizares, were aghast to find he had signed a four-year pre-contract with Real Madrid a few weeks after his great display in the World Cup decider against Denmark.

Celta also were aghast. Neither Real nor Canizares had thought fit to mention it, and what in other countries would be regarded as an illegal approach to a player under contract to June 1995 is regarded in Spain purely as an immoral approach.

The Celta fans were so incensed that they hurled all manner of insults at their own keeper throughout the following match, against Tenerife. As in the 3-0 Cup semi-final three days earlier, "Cani" kept a clean sheet. But if the crowd hostility continues, don't be surprised if he goes.

REAL MADRID have discovered that talent does not have to be bought in.

The long-term injury to Alfonso, the medium-term absence of Butragueno and the momentary suspension of Zamorano persuaded coach Benito Floro to call Jose Luis Morales into his squad for the disastrous Cup tie at home to Tenerife, who won 3-0.

Morales, a 20-year-old striker, had muttered about going on loan to Racing Santander rather than continue in Real's reserves, but changed his mind when asked to make his League debut.

He scored the first goal in the crucial 2-0 win over Deportivo with an overhead scissors kick, and when sent on as sub in the second half against Atletico, he broke a tedious stalemate with a crisp shot on the turn.

He is being hailed as the natural successor to Butragueno or, if you prefer nicknames, the Vulture could be replaced by the White Squirrel.

RESULTS

PRIMERA DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
La Coruna	24	15	6	3	32	9	36
Real Madrid	24	13	5	6	33	24	31
Barcelona	24	13	4	7	54	31	30
Athletic Bilbao	24	11	5	8	38	27	27
Sporting Gijon	24	12	3	9	33	27	27
Real Zaragoza	24	11	4	9	42	32	26
Racing Santander	24	10	6	8	25	21	26
Sevilla	24	7	11	6	31	24	25
Albacete	24	8	9	7	33	32	25
Real Sociedad	24	9	7	8	27	30	25
Tenerife	24	10	4	10	30	35	24
Real Oviedo	24	7	9	8	24	29	23
Valencia	24	8	7	9	28	34	23
Atletico Madrid	24	7	8	9	35	30	22
Celta	24	7	7	10	21	28	21
Logrones	24	5	10	9	29	35	20
Rayo Vallecano	24	7	6	11	30	42	20
Real Valladolid	24	4	10	10	18	32	18
Lleida	24	4	8	12	17	34	16
Osasuna	24	5	5	14	20	44	15

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, JANUARY 23

WEEKEND

CELTA 0
LA CORUNA 0. Att: 33,000.

SPORTING GIJON 2 (Stanic 35, Saric 89)
VAZLLADOLID 0. Att: 18,600.

REAL SOCIEDAD 2 (Kodro 1, 55)
BARCELONA 1 (Laudrup 9). Att: 27,000.

REAL MADRID 0
OSASUNA 0. Att: 65,000.

ALBACETE 1 (Geli 89)
ATHLETIC BILBAO 0. Att: 14,000.

RAYO VALLECANO 1 (Pablo 68)
RACING SANTANDER 1 (Popov 42).
Att: 9,000.

SEVILLA 0
REAL ZARAGOZA 1 (Aragon 80). Att: 35,000.

VALENCIA 2 (Fernando 18, Penev 30 pen)
REAL OVIEDO 2 (Jokanovic 59, Carlos 70).
Att: 35,000.

LOGRONES 0 (Herrero 19)
ATLETICO MADRID 0. Att: 9,000.

LLEIDA 1 (Gonzalo 84)
TENERIFE 1 (Dertycia 10). Att: 8,000.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

MIDWEEK

SPANISH CUP — QUARTER-FINALS, 1ST LEG

REAL BETIS 0
BARCELONA 0. Att: 25,000.

REAL ZARAGOZA 2 (Aragon 20 pen, Poyet 65)
SEVILLA 1 (Cortijo 86). Att: 20,000.

OVIEDO 1 (Jankovic 29)
CELTA 0. Att: 9,00.

TENERIFE 2 (Latorre 28, Dertycia 41)
REAL MADRID 1 (Zamorano 56). Att: 15,000.

WEEKEND

LA CORUNA 2 (Donato 45 pen, Bebeto 88)
SPORTING GIJON 1 (Juanele 89 pen).
Att: 23,000.

BARCELONA 2 (Julio Salinas 71, 80)
ALBACETE 1 (Chesa 80). Att: 80,000.

VALLADOLID 0
REAL MADRID 0. Att: 30,000.

ATHLETIC BILBAO 4 (Garitano 2, 48 pen, Valverde 10, Ciganda 63)
LLEIDA 0. Att: 30,000.

REAL ZARAGOZA 3 (Uria 44 og, Poyet 51, Esnaider 77)
REAL SOCIEDAD 0. Att: 15,000.

OSASUNA 0
SEVILLA 0. Att: 15,000.

RACING SANTANDER 0
LOGRONES 0. Att: 18,000.

OVIEDO 1 (Pedro 5 pen)
VALENCIA 0. Att: 20,000.

TENERIFE 3 (Dertycia 28, Del Solar 45, Pier 84)
RAYO VALLECANO 1 (Hugo Sanchez 35).
Att: 17,000.

Head boy . . . La Coruna striker Bebeto.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6

MIDWEEK

SPANISH CUP — QUARTER-FINALS, 2ND LEG

BARCELONA 0
REAL BETIS 1 (Felipe 27). Att: 30,000.

SEVILLA 1 (Moya 35)
REAL ZARAGOZA 1 (Poyet 85). Att: 35,000.

CELTA 5 (P. Salinas 1, Salva 46, Ratkovic 56, Gudelj 70, Carlos 87)
REAL OVIEDO 0. Att: 12,000.

REAL MADRID 0
TENERIFE 3 (Aguilera 44, Latorre 54, 79).
Att: 50,000.

WEEKEND

REAL MADRID 2 (Morales 57, Michel 72)
LA CORUNA 0. Att: 60,000.

BARCELONA 2 (Stoichkov 4, Baquero 72)
ATHLETIC BILBAO 3 (Valverde 3, Ciganda 21, Guerrero 49). Att: 70,000.

SPORTING GIJON 0
REAL OVIEDO 0. Att: 26,200.

ALBACETE 2 (Zalazar 49, Menendez 87)
REAL ZARAGOZA 1 (Gay 32). Att: 12,000.

REAL SOCIEDAD 1 (Kodro 45)
OSASUNA 0. Att: 24,100.

SEVILLA 3 (Simeone 45, 83 pen, Monchu 90)
VALLADOLID 3 (Amavisca 18, 22, Alberto 63).
Att: 35,000.

VALENCIA 2 (Mijatovic 3 pen, 51)
RACING SANTANDER 1 (Popov 27).
Att: 40,000.

LOGRONES 1 (Salenko 90)
TENERIFE 2 (Latorre 66, Felipe 73). Att: 8,000.

CELTA 3 (Losada 11, 90, Andrijasevic 43)
ATLETICO MADRID 2 (Kosecki 7, Oliete 76 og). ATT: 21,000.

RAYO VALLECANO 1 (Calderon 85)
LLEIDA 2 (Virgilio 23, Jaime 34). Att: 8,000.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13

WEEKEND

LA CORUNA 2 (Bebeto 43, Fran 46)
SEVILLA 0. Att: 20,000.

REAL OVIEDO 0
REAL MADRID 1 (Hierro 45). Att:19,000.

REAL ZARAGOZA 6 (Caceres 5, Gay 15, Esnaider 39, 45, Higuera 65, Poyet 75)
BARCELONA 3 (Romario 31, 76, Laudrup 47).
Att: 40,000.

ATHLETIC BILBAO 0
RAYO VALLECANO 0. Att: 33,000.

ATLETICO MADRID 2 (Quico 5, Luis Garcia 60 pen)
SPORTING GIJON 0. Att: 35,000.

VALLADOLID 0
REAL SOCIEDAD 0. Att: 16,000.

RACING SANTANDER 2 (Mutiu 81, Chili 93)
CELTA 1 (Giudelj 70 pen). Att: 13,856.

OSASUNA 3 (Urban 39, Christiansen 76, Jose Mari 91)
ALBACETE 1 (Nilson 74). Att: 12,000.

TENERIFE 1 (Dertycia 45)
VALENCIA 0. Att: 19,000.

LLEIDA 1 (Milinkovic 69)
LOGRONES 1 (Salenko 45). Att: 13,000.

Penev keeps counting

ANOTHER man who is counting his nuts is Valencia's Bulgarian striker, Lubo Penev.

He needed a 45-minute operation on his left testicle after being hit by a medicine ball during a session in the gym, and while he was on the table the surgeon — ominously named Sole Balcalls — discovered complications.

After a brief holiday in Bulgaria, Penev returned to have a malignant tumour removed. The surgeon predicted a five-month recovery period, ruling out the World Cup, but Penev returned to Valencia claiming that the chemotherapy was not affecting him and that he would be back within two months.

Penev's long-term absence, coupled with those of Fernando (thigh) and Roberto (tendon) have left Valencia so short of personnel that new manager Hector Nunez has had to bring in untried youngsters.

They include 16-year-old Diego Ribera, who is still studying for his "O" levels and has to be home by 10 at night.

Right on . . . Lubo Penev (on the right).

Real Betis close to Final place

THERE are some unexpected protagonists in the semi-finals of the Spanish Cup, with none of the Big Four — Real, Atletico, Barca and Bilbao — among those present.

It's the first time this has happened since 1948 and the presence of lowly-placed First Division sides Celta, Tenerife and Zaragoza, with Second Division Real Betis, meant that the price of UEFA Cup places went up. The final is scheduled for April 20 at Atletico's Manzanares Stadium.

FRANCE

BY ANDRE DUCLOS

Master Marcel

He's now a real star

STRANGE but true. The most successful French footballer in Italy, and Milan, is not Jean-Pierre Papin, but Marcel Desailly.

He is the player who, allegedly, was offered by the now disgraced Bernard Tapie to Silvio Berlusconi because Marseille desperately needed the money, and whom Berlusconi bought as a kind of favour to Tapie.

Now it seems as if Berlusconi has done himself a favour. And Milan. For Desailly has been so colossal a success that they would like to hang on to him.

Big, Ghanaian-born midfielder Desailly's contract runs to 1997, at some £410,000 a year. But Milan now want to extend it by a year or two, and give him more money. At a time when Milan were lamenting the loss, for various reasons, of their three great Dutchmen, up pops Desailly to fill the breach.

His muscular frame and firm tackling have given new stability to the defence. And as Berlusconi says, he is now using the ball shrewdly, too.

Moreover, he is the complete professional. None of the temperamental gaffes and outbursts associated with so many stars in Italy. Desailly is devoted to the colours. Milan's colours. Playing on a Wednesday in the European Super Cup against Parma, he suffered painful injuries to a calf and toenail, but insisted on playing four days later at the Olimpico, against Roma. And very well indeed did he play. When Paris SG recently went in for him, Milan's answer was a firm refusal. They know where they're well off. So does Desailly. "I see my future in a Milan jersey," he says.

"I've signed a contract and I hope to keep strictly to it. If it was up to me. I'd stay with this club for life. All they want is for you to play, and give your best."

Capello, the manager, calls him "a real star" and adds: "I've been struck by the ease with which he settled into the team."

That is indeed something special when so many foreigners need at least a season to get their feet under the table.

Strange, the sniping between two of our finest players, Eric Cantona and David Ginola.

Ginola (right) was put out by the way Gerard Houllier left him on the bench until late in the last World Cup game against Bulgaria.

Cantona, never one to pull punches said: "He's played five times with France and lost three times. Who is Ginola?"

This he followed by observing: "Ginola has all the technical qualities, but he's weak in the head."

You would hardly expect Ginola, the gifted Paris SG, ex-Brest, ex-Toulon inside-forward, to put up with that. Nor did he.

"Is Cantona sure that he always made the right choices in life?" he asked.

Cantona's old bugbear, Henri Michel, will be in the US as manager of the Cameroon team. A derisory outburst, when Michel was manager of France, cost Cantona a long exclusion from the international team.

Michel emphasises the passion of Cameroon's 12 million inhabitants for the national team, by contrast with the large indifference of the French population when it comes to the Blues. "This world, this passion, is what I have been missing for years," he says.

Lazio appear keen on signing the Marseille and French international centre-back, Basile Boli, who was involved in another of those torrid incidents of late, because of a serious foul on Monaco striker Yuri Djorkaeff.

Meanwhile Basile's younger brother, Roger, has come out from under his shadow to enjoy an excellent season with Lens.

"It's true, I suffered," he admits. "I suffered from being only the brother."

RESULTS

DIVISION ONE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Paris SG	27	17	8	2	37	12	42
Marseille	27	15	7	5	40	22	37
Auxerre	27	13	6	8	38	20	32
Nantes	27	11	10	6	33	19	32
Bordeaux	27	12	6	8	31	23	30
Cannes	27	10	10	7	33	30	30
Montpellier	27	10	10	7	27	24	30
Monaco	27	10	9	8	40	29	29
Lens	27	8	12	7	26	23	28
Lyon	27	11	6	10	25	27	28
St Etienne	27	8	11	8	27	24	27
Strasbourg	27	8	11	8	31	31	27
Sochaux	27	7	11	9	27	28	25
Metz	27	8	9	10	22	25	25
Le Havre	27	4	14	9	19	27	22
Caen	27	9	4	14	20	39	22
Lille	27	5	11	11	26	36	21
Martigues	27	4	11	12	23	42	19
Angers	27	3	10	14	24	42	16
Toulouse	27	3	10	14	16	42	16

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, JANUARY 23

WEEKEND

FRENCH CUP — 1ST ROUND (PROPER)

STRASBOURG 1 BORDEAUX 1
Bordeaux won 3-2 on pens

LILLE 1 RENNES 2

LYON 2 NIMES 0

BRIVE 0 MARSEILLE 0
Marseille won 4-2 on pens

MARTIGUES 0 BASTIA 2

EPINAL 1 SOCHAUX 2

MURET 0 MONACO 1

SETE 1 CAEN 0

LE HAVRE 2 BEAUVAIS 3

GUINGAMP 3 CANNES 2

PAU 1 ST ETIENNE 1
Pau won 4-3 on pens

SAINT-LEU 0 METZ 1

CHATEAUROUX 1 ANGERS 0

VAUX-EN-VELIN 0 NANTES 2

SAINT-MALO 0 MONTPELLIER 0
Montpellier won 4-2 on pens

COTE-CHAUDE 0 PARIS SG 10

PONTIVY 0 AUXERRE 3

NEUVILLE 1 TOULOUSE 2

TRELAZE 0 LENS 5

LAVAL 2 ROUEN 0

SENS 0 LE MANS 4

ALES 2 PERPIGNAN 1

EVRY 0 CHARLEVILLE 1

BOURGES 0 CHARTELLERAULT 0
Chartellerault won 6-5 on pens

VIRY-CHATILLON 0 LIBOURNE 1

FORBACH 0 SEDAN 1

VITROLLES 0 RED STAR 93 4

LYON-LA DUCHERE 1 RODEZ 0

CARQUEFOU 0 LORIENT 1

FECAMP 1 VALENCIENNES 1
Valenciennes won 4-3 on pens

RACING 92 2 PARIS FC 1

AVION 1 LONS-LE-SAUNIER 1
Avion won 3-1 on pens

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

WEEKEND

CAEN 0
PARIS SG 2 (Ginola 13, Le Guen 86). **Att:** 19,259.

MARSEILLE 2 (Anderson 24 pen, 50)
MONACO 1 (Djorkaeff 23). **Att:** 35,000.

BORDEAUX 1 (Vercruysse 36)
ST ETIENNE 2 (Blanc 16, Wohlfarth 37). **Att:** 21,000.

MONTPELLIER 1 (Lefevre 75)
NANTES 0. **Att:** 10,613.

LYON 1 (Roy 55)
AUXERRE 0. **Att:** 18,350.

STRASBOURG 0
LE HAVRE 3 (Tiehi 61, Marquet 63, Gourouli 80). **Att:** 9,821.

SOCHAUX 1 (Caveglia 80)
CANNES 1 (Ayache 17). **Att:** 3,650.

ANGERS 1 (Lagrange 82 pen)
LENS 2 (R. Boli 14, Laigle 79). **Att:** 4,073.

METZ 0
MARTIGUES 0. **Att:** 5,909.

LILLE 3 (Etame 47, 79, Hansen 69)
TOULOUSE 0. **Att:** 4,201.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6

WEEKEND

PARIS-SG 3 (Guerin 16, 89, Ginola 66)
ANGERS 0. **Att:** 20,000.

ST ETIENNE 0
MARSEILLE 0. **Att:** 40,000.

TOULOUSE 0
BORDEAUX 0. **Att:** 11,098.

AUXERRE 1 (C. Martins 85)
SOCHAUX 0. **Att:** 8,000.

LE HAVRE 0
MONTPELLIER 0. **Att:** 6,294.

NANTES 2 (Loko 42, Quedec 64 pen)
LILLE 0. **Att:** 12,325.

CANNES 3 (Priou 31, 56, Madar 76)
CAEN 0. **Att:** 3,000.

MARTIGUES 0
LYON 1 (Marcelo 74). **Att:** 3,000.

MONACO 2 (Klinsmann 39, 64)
STRASBOURG 1 (Farina 60). **Att:** 3,500.

LENS 2 (R. Boli 37, Meyrieu 89)
METZ 0. **Att:** 14,687.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13

WEEKEND

MONTPELLIER 0
PARIS SG 0. **Att:** 17,750.

MARSEILLE 5 (Stojkovic 22, 47, Boghossian 57, Anderson 70, 81)
TOULOUSE 1 (Candela 49). ATT: 22,000.

AUXERRE 3 (Cocard 16, Vahirua 57, 76 pen)
MARTIGUES 0. **Att:** 5,000.

STRASBOURG 0
NANTES 3 (Ouedec 6, 46, Naybet 60). **Att:** 12,475.

METZ 1 (Dogon 17 og)
BORDEAUX 0. **Att:** 8,561.

ANGERS 1 (Lagrange 61)
CANNES 1 (Sauvaget 32). **Att:** 3,986.

LILLE 1 (Assadourian 66)
MONACO 1 (Djorkaeff 58). **Att:** 6,923.

LYON 1 (S. Roche 72)
LENS 2 (Person 29, Laigle 52). **Att:** 15,000.

SOCHAUX 3 (Piton 3, Baudry 69, Caveglia 82)
ST ETIENNE 2 (Blanc 30, Wohlfarth 37). **Att:** 3,718.

CAEN 1 (Rouissi 60)
LE HAVRE 1 (Tiehi 89). **Att:** 13,180.

INSIDE OUT

COMPILED BY DAVID PROLE & JOHN KELLY

VIKTOR MEDVEDCHUK... MP FOR KIEV, DYNAMO!

UKRAINE'S most illustrious soccer team, Kiev Dynamo, nominated a candidate in the country's parliamentary elections in March.

Viktor Medvedchuk, chairman of Ukraine's Association of Lawyers who represented the club in a lengthy financial scandal, ran under a law allowing labour collectives to nominate their own candidates.

"Medvedchuk was the first person at the national level to put soccer's legal affairs in order," club president said. "We want him in parliament."

CALVO'S LATE CALL TO ARMS

ELOY CALVO, chairman of Spanish First Division club Sporting Gijon, has just received military call-up papers . . . at the age of 70.

Calvo told guests at a reception to mark the Asturian league derby between Sporting and Real Oviedo he had recently received the summons from the army.

"The army apparently has me on record as being born in 1977," he said. "However, to avoid any problem I will present myself in the town on the appointed date."

THE GREAT LEAP FORWARD?

CHINESE soccer officials — eager to boost the standard of play in the country — are introducing new rules banning top players from having long hair, smoking, drinking or wearing rings during games or practice. Players must also dress neatly and cleanly.

The rules, approved at a meeting in Beijing are being introduced with the aim of China reaching World Cup standard within 10 years.

***The Beijing Evening News* said the new rules will help give the players the fighting spirit and discipline they have lacked up to now "and the strength to resist the worship of money pleasures that are corroding the morale of sports teams".**

But it also says the rules are petty, asking "What has Ruud Gullit's long hair to do with his sporting excellence?"

PELE'S SON BEATEN IN DEBUT

EDINHO, the goalkeeper son of Brazilian legend Pele, made his professional debut, but ended up on the losing side as Santos went down 1-0 to Santo Andre.

Edinho (below left), who was not at fault with the goal, was beaten in the 52nd minute when Santo Andre striker Claudinho rose unmarked to head in a cross.

Santos, the club where Pele (below right) spent nearly all of his career, were left rooted to the bottom of the Sao Paulo championship following the defeat.

The 23-year-old Edinho has been at the club for three years.

FOX NOT ON THE RUN

KEVIN KEEGAN was in such a hurry to leave Selhurst Park after Wimbledon's 4-2 win over his Newcastle side that he allowed the team coach to set off without new £2.25million signing Ruel Fox (right).

"They've left me behind," Fox groaned. "They've forgotten me. The coach has gone and it's got all my stuff on it. They've tried to disown me already. I didn't play that badly did I?

"I've got no clothes to wear and I can't see myself walking around East Anglia [where Fox lives] for two days just wearing a Newcastle tracksuit!"

MARADONA RULES IN FAKE ITALIAN POLL

A FAKE party "led" by Argentinian star Diego Maradona would have won five million votes in Italy's March elections, according to researchers who say Italians are so confused about politics that opinion polls mean nothing.

The Directa Institute said it had slipped the fictitious "Avanti Italia" [Forward Italy] party, "led" by Maradona, into a telephone survey of 800 eligible voters.

"Of those interviewed 10.8 per cent . . . said they supported the Maradona party," Directa said.

The percentage corresponds to about five million of the 48.4 million Italians eligible to vote in the election!

THE FINAL MASTERMIND

GRANT HUGHES almost certainly will be unique among spectators at the World Cup. How many others have won their country's version of Mastermind by answering questions on World Cup history?

Hughes, now 30, became New Zealand Mastermind in 1986. His prize — all TV in his country is advertising-funded — was a three-week trip to England for two. He and his father travelled, and Hughes spent part of the time training with Crystal Palace.

"I had played good-class soccer in New Zealand, with my home-town club, Rotorua Suburbs, and took the chance to see if I could further my game at professional level," he said.

"That did not happen, but it was still a tremendous learning experience.

"I can't speak too highly of Steve Coppell, who was then the manager, the training staff and the players, for the way they treated me."

On his return home, Hughes concentrated on his studies at Auckland University for a degree in management studies and labour relations, and now works with a major bank.

He lives on Waiheke Island, a holiday resort about half an hour from Auckland centre by boat, and devotes much of his spare time to increasing his knowledge of soccer, and the World Cup in particular.

"I simply love football," he said. "And the World Cup has always held a special interest for me because it represents the pinnacle of the game."

His knowledge and the fame he won as NZ's then youngest Mastermind winner led to an approach by a leading sports tour company, Ultra-Sport Travel, who want him to host a party of soccer fans to various World Cup matches, culminating in the final.

"Naturally I was delighted to accept," he said. "The exact arrangements depend on ticket sales, and the fact that the New Zealand soccer scene is in a fairly depressed state at the moment hasn't helped.

"But I'll definitely be there," says Hughes. "To attend a World Cup has been a lifelong dream."

In the meantime he is engaged on his "labour of love" — writing an extensive history of the World Cup. This is largely for his own amusement, but it might yet catch a publisher's eye.

Anyone who can beat a college deputy principal, a high-school teacher of economics and a librarian to win a Mastermind title must have plenty to offer.

GERMANY

BY ARTHUR ROTMIL

Confidence . . . Bayer Leverkusen coach Dragoslav Stepanovic believes his side will win the Bundesliga.

Bayern face a heavy task

A 3-1 HOME defeat by struggling VfB Stuttgart set Franz Becken-bauer's latest reign off to a bad start.

"Kaiser" Franz is now acting as chief coach with Bayern Munich as well as being a vice-president of the club. He has replaced Erich Ribbeck and intends to keep the coaching job until the end of the season.

Nine of the 17 other managers are tipping Bayern to win the championship — they were third at the winter break — but they will have to do much better than they did against Stuttgart.

Bayern still have the largest and most expensive squad in the Bundesliga, but at least one team boss is convinced that his side can upset the odds. Leverkusen's Dragoslav Stepanovic claims: "We will be champions. Nobody is stronger than us."

Eintracht Frankfurt's Klaus Toppmoller sounds less confident, but is banking on Ghanaian striker Anthony Yeboah, now fully recovered from his knee injury.

The midfield has been strengthened by international Thomas Doll, on loan from Lazio.

Beckenbauer says: "I don't want to talk to the players too much because they will lose concentration and not listen."

But his proposed tactical switch using Olaf Thon as libero and moving Lothar Matthaus back into midfield, fell through.

Thon has had his sixth operation in seven years, so Matthaus has retained the libero role for the time being.

Beckenbauer also ordered the gap between midfield and the strikers to be filled.

"When we lose the ball the forwards are to fall back, those on the wings should move inside, and the space must be closed," he demands.

Two attacking options are considered — using two front men and five in midfield with Matthaus the central figure, or only one striker and two attacking midfielders behind him.

Bayern fans are now holding their breath waiting to see if the Kaiser's magical formula will work.

Comebacks . . . Eintracht Frankfurt's fit-again striker Anthony Yeboah (above) and Leipzig's on-loan striker Darko Pancev (right).

BUNDESLIGA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bayer Leverkusen	20	9	7	4	40	27	25
Eintracht Frankfurt	20	10	5	5	35	24	25
Bayern Munich	20	8	8	4	42	23	24
Kaiserslautern	20	10	4	6	39	26	24
Werder Bremen	20	8	7	5	30	23	23
Hamburg	20	10	3	7	34	29	23
Duisburg	20	8	7	5	26	29	23
Borussia Mg	20	8	5	7	41	38	21
Karlsruhe	20	6	8	6	27	22	20
Bor. Dortmund	20	7	6	7	29	31	20
Dyn. Dresden	20	6	8	6	21	29	20
Freiburg	20	7	5	8	36	36	19
Koln	20	8	3	9	24	28	19
Stuttgart	20	5	8	7	26	31	18
Nurnberg	20	6	3	11	24	33	15
Wattenscheid	20	3	8	9	26	38	14
Schalke	20	4	6	10	20	34	14
Leipzig	20	2	9	9	16	35	13

Rot-Weiss on the way out

ROT-WEISS ESSEN are to lose their professional licence, despite having reached the DFB Cup semi-finals.

They are unable to pay back a £700,000 loan, and have been unable to prove to the DFB that they will be able to do so in the foreseeable future.

Essen also failed to provide complete and accurate bills and guarantees, as required by the rules.

The club, founded in 1907, won the championship in 1955 and competed in the first Champions Cup in the following season, losing to Hibernian of Scotland. They have since fallen on bad times, although they gained promotion to the Second Division last spring.

From next season they must play in an amateur league, and the professional contracts signed by their players will be dissolved.

Leipzig, the former top East German club, have signed Darko Pancev on loan. Pancev, Champions Cup winner with Red Star Belgrade and Europe's Golden Boot winner in 1991 with 34 goals, cost Internazionale £7 million, but did not make the grade in Italy.

Leipzig, the relegation candidates, paid only £10,000 to get him until the end of the season.

Inter are pleased that he has found somewhere to continue playing instead of, as the spare foreigner in Milan, sitting in the stand.

Pancev says: "I want to play and prove that I can make it in such a strong league as Germany's. "Sevilla and Marseille were also interested, but I found Leipzig's management very open and honest in their dealings with me, so I decided to come here."

The proposed transfer of national team goalkeeper Bodo Illgner from Koln to Karlsruhe has fallen through. But he still insists that he will leave.

HOLLAND . . . . . .

A FAVOUR FROM THE ARABS

Early return . . . Leo Beenhakker.

SAUDI ARABIA may well have done Holland a favour by their decision to change coaches before the World Cup.

Leo Beenhakker and his assistant, Wim Jansen, left because of a feeling that a switch of styles from South American to European would not suit their players.

Beenhakker is the former coach of Holland, Ajax and Real Madrid, and Jansen is a former international and general manager of Feyenoord.

The Dutch FA did not mind at all. They promptly snapped up both to become national spies for Holland. And why not?

As Beenhakker says: "We have a suitcase full of information about the Saudis. You could say we know nearly everything about the other teams in Holland's group in America — Belgium and Morocco as well as Saudi.

"Apart from what we know already we will be travelling around to look at the teams in action. "Strangely enough a Dutch FA official warned us before we moved to Saudi that we could expect to be back within a year."

Rinus Michels, another former Holland manager, is travelling to the States for another reason. He is the new adviser to Alan Rothenberg, chief of the World Cup organisation and chairman of the USSF.

The Americans think a lot about youth football, and know that Michels can help. After all, the Dutch are well known for the way they develop their own talent from the age of around eight or nine — sometimes younger.

Not surprisingly, also, the Americans have invited a delegation of Dutch policemen to the US during the World Cup finals, simply to teach them how to handle football supporters.

The FBI will be tuned in as well. The Americans do not know what soccer hooligans can be, and they are interested in learning how to cope with them. They have heard of a few Dutch problems!

Jari Litmanen, the young Finn, has been chosen Footballer of the Year in Holland. Not surprisingly perhaps, because he knows where the goal is and knocks them in for Ajax, so much so that he has attracted the attention of foreign scouts.

Ajax hope to hang on to him and to chief coach Louis Van Gaal, who is staying for another two years, despite rumours of foreign bids for his services.

No surprise in the choice of Goalkeeper of the Year — Ed de Goey, of Feyenoord and Holland, or that of Clarence Seedorf (Ajax) in winning the award for young talent.

NAC Breda, who knocked inconsistent PSV Eindhoven out of the Dutch FA Cup in the quarter-finals, won the award as Club of the Year.

ERIC NICHOLLS

SWEDEN . . . . . .

No pay rise, so Marovic goes home

IFK Norrkoping, last season's League runners-up, will start the new season without Yugoslav left-back Slobodan Marovic, who has gone back to Belgrade after being refused a rise.

"I know what top players in this country earn, so I wasn't being unrealistic," were his parting words.

Marovic's former Red Star team-mate, Dusko Radinovic, has decided to remain at Degerfors in spite of lures by bigger clubs. Radinovic, a member of Red Star's World Club Cup-winning team of 1991, was one of the classiest defenders in Sweden last season.

There could be a couple of exotic new names in the Allsvenskan this year. Norrkoping are giving trials to Agent Sawu, the 23-year-old Zimbabwean international, and promoted Landskrona hope to hire defender Tati from Spain's Sporting Gijon.

IFK Gothenburg have had a low profile in the transfer market, yet still look strong enough for another title. Their only current problems are long-term injuries to defenders Magnus "Olme" Johansson and Ola Svensson.

As always, Norrkoping will be thereabouts, too, and everyone is interested to see how coaches Rolf Zetterlund and Hasse Backe will fare with their new clubs, Malmo and AIK Stockholm respectively.

Zetterlund has made his first major signing, bringing back stopper Jonas Wirmola from Sheffield United.

Last season's surprise packets, Helsingborg and Trelleborg, could find it tougher this time. Helsingborg have lost two top forwards, Henrik Larsson going to Feyenoord and Mats Magnusson retiring to become a youth coach.

PENTTI HIETANEN

SWITZERLAND . . .

Reserves do well

WORLD CUP preparations got off to a mixed start when the squad selected for a training stint in America, with matches against the US and Mexico, were deprived of several key players.

The four German "mercenaries" — Ciriaco Sforza, Adrian Knup, Stephane Chapuisat and Alain Sutter — were among those missing.The Swiss, billed as a "B" team, drew with World Cup hosts US, also weakened by a number of missing foreign-based stars; and then won 5-1 against Mexico, who earlier held Germany to a goalless draw.

Team manager Roy Hodgson was delighted, but clashed with the media, who are beginning to pressurise the squad and are not sticking to pre-arranged times for interviews. Hodgson may soon have problems in finding his formation. Strikers Nestor Subiat and Marco Grassi, who each scored twice against the Mexicans, are pushing their claims for inclusion.

But can Hodgson afford to leave out such experienced and established forwards as Chapuisat and Knup?

Problems also arose over the release of the German-based players, whose clubs are putting all kinds of obstacles in the way.

Germany's and national team captain, Lothar Matthaus, is rumoured to be contemplating ending his career in Switzerland. He already has had preliminary talks with Xamax Neuchatel.

His new bride, former Miss Switzerland Lotita Moren, apparently would like to return home, and regards the lakeside resort of Neuchatel, in the French-speaking part, as ideal.

ARTHUR ROTMIL

Late challenge . . . Switzerland's Nestor Subiat (left) holds off Alexi Lalas of the US.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND . . . . .

New link may mean a half-time break

A MERGER between the Football League of Ireland and the Football Association of Ireland has been agreed and from next season the domestic League in the Republic will be run under FAI auspices.

An earlier start to the season is being planned, and the 1994-95 campaign probably will open on July 24, a week after the World Cup Final.

"There is a strong feeling within the game that our clubs would be better prepared for Europe if they had a couple of competitive games before they played in the UEFA Cup," said the League's president, Dr Tony O'Neill.

If the early start goes ahead there would then be a break from mid-December to mid-January.

Meanwhile the numbers playing soccer in the Republic have doubled in the eight years since Jack Charlton took over as national manager. Before his appointment in February 1986 there were 4,124 teams. Now there are 8,802. The number of players has gone up from 80,000 in 1986 to 161,357 by December 31.

The Republic's friendly against Bolivia on May 24 will be the first soccer international under the new Lansdowne Road floodlights.

It's been a disastrous 1994 for long-time leaders Shamrock Rovers. When the 12 Premier Division clubs were split into top six and bottom six in January, Rovers had 10 points to spare over Cork City, the reigning champions. By mid-February Rovers had been overhauled, and knocked out of the FAI Cup in the first round by Bohemians.

SEAN CREEDON

PORTUGAL . . . . . .

Robson's revival

WHEN I last met Bobby Robson he was a devastated man after his dismissal by Sporting Lisbon.

"I was going to win the title," he said. "We were in front. You see what they did to me?"

Then he went to see a lawyer to start negotiations for receiving what was still due to him.

The fear of the customary decline after a good start had prompted president Cintra to show Robson the door and to hire the Portugese national manager, Carlos Queiroz.

Sporting lost a crucial game at Benfica and everything seemed very grim indeed.

Champions FC Porto, on the other hand, were going through a season of highs and lows, and Tomislav Ivic's leadership frequently was questioned by supporters.

With the visit to Benfica fast approaching, they did not hesitate — in an elegant but very firm way, Ivic was fired and Robson put in charge.

Porto, however, were clearly beaten by a far superior Benfica, and Robson was six points behind the leaders and with very slim chances of recovery.

"When we suffered the second goal with 10 men due to Fernando Couto's red card, the game was over," he said.

"We played attacking football, and showed courage. And I'm very angry with Couto for having allowed himself to be provoked.

"Now everything is more difficult. But the title is not lost. There are still many games to play, and we must be patient."

Benfica now lead Sporting by three points and Porto by six, but Porto's football is delighting the crowds, who still entertain a very slim hope that Benfica may weaken in the last part of the race.

The Lisbon Eagles cannot afford to let go. They need to return to the centre stage of European football and to fill the stadium.

Thousands are now going back to see the clean and classic football being played by Pinto, Rui Costa, Isaias, Kulkov, Schwarz and the new Brazilian star, Ailton.

If they keep their current form, the confrontation between Porto and Sporting at the end of March possibly will help Benfica to the so-much-needed title.

The election of the new chairman and directors has generated a great wave of enthusiasm among Benfica supporters.

In their thousands, they are queuing every day at the Stadium of Light to get membership as "socios" (fee-paying members of the club).

No. 100,000 was treated to a champagne welcome party, and now the target is 150,000.

No wonder they say in Lisbon: "Benfica are the greatest in the world."

ALBERTO DA SILVA

Offender . . . FC Porto's Fernando Couto.

DENMARK . . . . . .

Olsen's about face

DENMARK'S record-capped international Morten Olsen has put his hat into the ring to succeed Richard Moller Nielsen as national team coach.

Olsen is currently manager of Koln in Germany, after enjoying great success at Brondby. Moller Nielsen, the unknown boss who so dramatically guided Denmark to triumph in the 1992 European Championship, has made it clear he will step down after the 1996 tournament — should Denmark qualify to defend their trophy.

Olsen, now aged 44, had always previously distanced himself from the role. But now he says: "I am very interested in doing the job.

"If you have ambition then being able to work with the very best players your own country can produce must be one of them.

"I am contracted to Koln until 1995, but the job won't be vacant before then anyway. And I wouldn't rule out a move back to Danish soccer after then."

But Olsen could face stiff competition in the future from two of the other great players in the famous Dynamite side of the 1980s. Frank Arnesen has just become manager of PSV Eindhoven after graduating from the German coaching academy. And Allan Simonsen has taken over the role of managing the Faroe Islands national side on a part-time basis while continuing to work with his home-town club Vejle.

Whether Denmark will qualify for the 1996 tournament must be hugely open to question after being drawn in a tough group with Belgium and their eternal bogeymen Spain. But Olsen believes they will, adding: "The problem with the World Cup qualification was that we experimented too much in the early games and lost vital points that we shouldn't have.

"I don't think that mistake will be made this time."

Denmark will definitely be able to call on the services of Michael Laudrup for the whole campaign this time. He has promised no repetition of the dispute which meant international exile for three years.

He said: "I hope to play at the very top level for another two years until the summer of 1996. And to finish on a high note at the finals in England would be wonderful.

"That is my dream, and then I can hand over to my younger brother Brian to carry on the Laudrup name."

JIM HOLDEN

Contender . . . Koln coach Morten Olsen.

TURKEY . . . . . .

Injuries lessen Gala's hopes

GALATASARAY are having injury problems as their venture into the Champions League draws nearer.

Okan, back after breaking a leg last year, lasted only 10 minutes of his comeback before having to go off. Turkyilmaz is midway through a two-month period resting a torn groin muscle, and Hakan is still seeking full fitness after a shoulder injury, although he scored twice in a 3-0 away win over Karsiyaka.

Gala led the table by three points after 17 games, but will need to be at full strength if they are to repeat the European form they showed when knocking out Manchester United.

They also face a struggle in the Cup after losing 2-1 in the first leg of the semi-final, against Kocaelispor, but have home advantage in the return.

In the other semi-final, Besiktas won their home leg 3-1 against Trabzonspor.

Three successive victories put Fenerbahce in second place, three points behind Galatasaray. Bulent is the League's top scorer, his hat-trick in a 5-0 rout of Genclerbirligi taking him to 17 goals.

Besiktas also had three wins in a row, without conceding a goal, but were still four points behind Fenerbahce and seven adrift of Gala.

Trabzonspor, fourth, were involved in disgraceful scenes during their Black Sea derby at Samsunspor. The match was abandoned after fans attacked referee Ergul Yucedag, alleging that he was showing bias against Samsun.

The Football Federation will rule on the situation in due course.

HASAN CEMALI

Still resting . . . Galatasaray striker Kubilay Turkyilmaz is recovering from an injury.

FAROE ISLANDS . . .

Simonsen named coach

FORMER Danish international midfielder Allan Simonsen has been named as the new coach of the all-amateur Faroe Islands national team.

The Faroes, perennial underdogs on the European scene, are most remembered for their stunning upset of Austria in their first major international match, a 1-0 victory in the European Championship qualifying tournament in 1990.

Simonsen, a former player with Borussia Monchengladbach, Barcelona and Charlton Athletic, signed a 21-month contract with the Faroe Islands FA. His first match in charge will be a home game against Greece in a European Championship qualifier in September.

Simonsen, 41, will remain chief coach of the Danish First Division team Vejle Boldklub, and was named best player in Europe in 1977, played 56 matches for Denmark from 1972 to 1986, scoring 21 goals.

Simonsen replaces Pall Gudlaugsson, who resigned last August after the team's biggest-ever defeat in an international match, a 7-0 loss to Norway in a friendly.

Since their debut on September 12, 1990, the North Atlantic squad have had few victories. The team finished last in its World Cup qualifying group last year after losing all nine games.

The Faroe Islands — a semi-independent Danish territory between Scotland and Iceland — was admitted into UEFA in 1989.

ISRAEL . . . . . .

Still no place for Mizrahi

TWO GOALS separated the top two clubs immediately before they were due to meet in what has long been dubbed the match of the season.

Maccabi Tel Aviv moved ahead by winning 2-1 at Hapoel Kvar Sava, while Maccabi Haifa were having to come from two down to draw 2-2 at Maccabi Netanya.

Tel Aviv have lost twice in 24 games but have a goal difference of 41. Haifa, still unbeaten, had a difference of 39, Alon Mizrahi topping the League scorers with 21 goals out of 54.

But 21-year-old Mizrahi still cannot get into the national squad. He calls himself "the best forward Israel have" and is a popular figure, though not with the coach, Shlomo Sharf. He says that Mizrahi's poor disciplinary record is keeping him out.

AVI MELLER

AUSTRIA . . . . . .

World Cup bid in the offing

THE Austrian FA (OFB) are considering applying to UEFA for permission to stage the European Championship finals in 2004, in a joint proposal with neighbouring Switzerland.

The Austrians have never been granted the organisation of any major finals.

Now they feel that the modern Prater Stadium, now renamed Ernst-Happel Stadion and the site of Champions Cup finals, would be a high-profile venue next to improved grounds in Salzburg and Innsbruck.

FK Austria Vienna striker Ralph Hassenhuttl is still hoping to become the first Austrian in modern times to play professional football in England. He spent a week on trial with Chelsea, but when the club insisted on a longer period of tests, FK ordered him to return to Vienna.

Everton also have shown interest in Hasenhuttl, capped 15 times, who would cost a modest £300,000.

Hasenhuttl — "I want to join Chelsea and live in London" — is an exception among Austrians. The vast majority want to play in Germany.

Two are making headlines there — Toni Polster (Koln) and Andy Herzog (Werder Bremen). Polster once starred for FK Austria, then moved to Torino and Sevilla, Logrones and Rayo Vallecano before joining Koln last summer. He played 55 times in the national side, won three League championships and was three times top scorer in Austria.

He scored nine goals in 15 Bundesliga games, more than any Koln team-mates. His marksmanship transformed Koln but when he lost form the team performances suffered.

ARTHUR ROTMIL

LUXEMBOURG . . .

THE NUMBER of professional players in the national squad has grown from three to four.

The latest addition is Jeff Strasser, signed by French club Metz from Swift Hesperage. He has won two caps in midfield, and coach Paul Phillipp is "very excited" by his new boy.

The promotion/play off scenarios are about to begin, and are quite complicated. After 18 games, where all clubs play the others home and away, the top six play off for the title, taking with them half their points total.

The bottom four enter a promotion play-off with the top two teams from divisions A and B, deciding who goes up and down.

Theo Scholten hit two goals as Avenir Beggen moved a point clear of Grevenmacher, winning 3-0 at home to Union. Grevenmacher stay second having drawn 0-0 with Jeunesse Esch.

Spora continued their revival, winning 2-1 at Dudelange, while Red Boys stayed at the bottom after a 4-4 thriller against Fola Esch.

LIECHTENSTEIN . . .

WITH only a hand-full of football clubs, Liechtenstein's chances of qualification for the European Championship are remote. In their last friendly they lost 2-0 at home to Estonia.

They will play all home matches at the FC Balzers ground, which happens to be the national stadium. Capacity is around 11,000, although there are only 1,000 seas.

Other clubs in the principality include Vaduz, Triesen, Schaan and Eschen. There are some talented players, such as Mario and Christoph Frick, but at most Liechenstein are hoping for a point or two from their five opponents — Portugal, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Austria and Latvia.

TIM BRICE

MALTA . . . . . .

Bad news for Ghedin

THREE games, two defeats, one goal, one point and bottom place in a four-sided tournament.

That was Malta's fate in the seventh Rothmans International staged in Valletta, and the outcome was little comfort for national coach Pietro Ghedin, who has his eyes on the forthcoming European Championship qualifying campaign.

Malta began with a 1-1 draw against Tunisia, but hopes of retaining the title soon evaporated, with 1-0 defeats by Georgia and the eventual winners, Slovenia.

"Once again we were beaten by counter-attacks," said Ghedin. "Three games in five days is rather a lot."

The lack of goals is a worry for fans, many of whom are wondering when Joe Zarb, a prolific marksman with Valletta, will be brought in.

He is leading the League list again with 12 goals after 11 games, including four out of eight against Birkirkara.

That gave Valletta 16 points and put them third, a point behind Floriana and three points behind the leaders, Hibernians.

DOMENICO AQUILINA

CZECH REPUBLIC

Tougher tasks ahead

THE split from Slovakia in football terms is all but complete, only the Under-21 quarter-final with Italy remaining for the remnants of the former "Federal FA" to organise.

On the other hand Czech and Moravian clubs know that they can offer Slovak players better terms, and more moves from East to West can be expected in the summer.

During the winter break coach Dusan Uhrin had his men in training camp and in action indoors at an international competition in Hamburg.

Just before League soccer shifted ice hockey from the top of the sports pages, the future national team played in Central Bohemia, winning 4-1 against Brandys of the Second Division.

A Moravian FA XI proved stronger opposition and the national squad could only draw 2-2.

The likely line-up emerging is Kouba in goal, Suchoparek-Kadlec-Novotny at the back, Hapal-Nemecek-Nemec-Berger-Latal in midfield and Kuka-Postulka as strikers.

All this experimentation was put to the test when the Czech Republic played their first official "A" international, in Istanbul.

The Slavs were three goals too good for the Turks, though the home side took an early lead. Goals from Novotny, a header — and the first ever score for the Czech Republic — restored the balance and further goals by Latal and two from Siegl, on passes from Kuka, gave Uhrin's side a comfortable first victory.

The next outing will be to Switzerland for a tougher test, provisionally in Zurich.

On the club front Sparta experienced nothing but frustration in trying to sign not only talented lower-division players, such as Roman Hogen from Chmel Blsany and Jablonec's Budka, but also established stars.

Patrick Berger of Slavia, Radoslav Latal of Sigma Olomouc and former Vitkovice and FC Porto defender Lubomir Vlk were on the shopping list, but the board and supporters have been disappointed. All but Budka declined to move.

In bygone times top clubs could virtually request anyone they wanted — Dukla took and kept all the young players they fancied, much to the detriment of Sparta and Slavia — and Sparta seem to want a return to those days.

A fierce media campaign has been critical, partly as the Sparta board still include a former agent of the notorious SB — Milos Moravec, now even less popular than in his police days.

Even the president, Petr Mach, has been under fire as a result of further support to Moravec.

Sparta recently were floated on the stock market and Mach is the major shareholder.

BULGARIA

Too much trouble for the BFU

WHAT will happen to the stars earning pesetas and escudos after the World Cup?

That odd question has been raised since the draw for the European Championship qualifiers, because players such as keeper Mikhailov, defenders Rakov and Bazinski and striker Sirakov will be in their mid-thirties when the qualifying series comes round and those in Spain and Portugal will be more interested in a final contract outside the country.

Qualification for the US probably saved national coach Dimitar Penev from the chop, banished the spectre of corruption, and stabilised the FA's finances.

Yet there was plenty of trouble at the mill before the championship restarted. The problems of "bribery" in October, when promoted Yantra Gabrovo were accused of trying to buy the points from their match with Red Star, were bad enough, as was the threat of Levski's international players not to play in World Cup matches.

Now BFU president Valentin Mihov again has had his work cut out to see that Slavia, CSKA and Lok Plovdiv come to their senses.

Promising Slavia goalkeeper Nenov suddenly "disappeared" from the club to return equally abruptly in the keen clutches, no pun intended, of rivals CSKA!

He was suspended until the end of the season, which probably would not have done his chances of making the World Cup squad any good.

That seemed to be that until Slavia offered to have the sanction lifted and transfer Nenov to CSKA as long as Slavia could have their former goalkeeper and current No. 1 Ananiev for a Spanish training camp, and there was not a little confusion as the first weekend of the season's second half approached with Slavia v Lok on the programme.

Meanwhile Penev was completing his plans for the international friendly in Spain, to be followed by at least two away games, one in Africa, and one at home before the World Cup kick-off.

BOB VAUGHAN

ROMANIA

Anghel's points to ponder

Hong Kong hero . . . Romania's Dumitrescu.

COACH Anghel Iordanescu has had an opportunity to test his home-based players during the break after a training camp in Switzerland.

The squad, without those abroad, experienced a rather different climate in Hong Kong, where the Carlsberg Tournament meant international opposition and a chance for a "Domestic XI" to show what they could do.

Romania finished third after drawing 1-1 with hong Kong and beating the US 2-1. Dumitrescu scored all three goals, one of them a penalty.

While the result must have been encouraging for Iordanescu, against a US side much nearer full strength than his, only Prunea, Prodan and Dumitrescu look certain starters when all the squad are available.

The FRF have agreed to give three points for a win in the championship from 1994-95. This had been thrown out by the clubs at their summer gathering last year.

SLOVAKIA

Weiss goal is a record

JOZEF VENGLOS departed for matches in the United Arab Emirates to a background of friction between the SFZ and Slovan, whose much-vaunted tour to South America was cancelled.

The task of moulding a national team in time for the European Championship qualifiers, is providing Venglos with one of his most problematic challenges in nearly 40 years in top soccer.

Egypt, Morocco and the UAE were the other participants in the Sharjah Tournament, won by the Egyptians with five points from three games.

Slovakia took three points, not a very convincing performance.

At least Weiss's goal in the opening game with the UAE ensured the Slovak Republic a win on their debut in world soccer, but there was not much else to cheer from 1-0 and 2-1 defeats, respectively by Egypt and Morocco.

Now fans at home await the first game in Bratislava, where Greece will be the visitors.

As the final days of training were completed before the restart Slovan were hoping their very good chances of taking the first Slovak League title in democratic times would not be affected by having health problems.

Midfielder Stanislav Chovreboc came back from Russia with hepatitis and manager Ondrus cancelled a visit to Argentina fearing that others might have been affected.

Fortunately, Slovan players selected for the national squad's UAE visit appear fit and well.

GREECE

Watch out for the spoilers!

ALL EYES in Greece will be on the national team's efforts in the World Cup this summer, but national coach Alketas Panagoulias has to look ahead to the European Championship.

He said that as soon as the World Cup matches are over, he will begin forming the team for the European competition in 1996, and will concentrate on young players.

Several of the squad who will be going to the United States will have to be replaced before long.

"We have to see things realistically," Panagoulias said. "Many of the veteran players will be burdened with yet another year and will not be in shape to continue the pace for the European games. That is why we must start now to find the men of tomorrow.

"After the World Cup, the national team will enter a new phase."

Greece play Russia, Scotland, Finland, Faroe Islands and San Marino, and Panagoulias says: "We all know about Russia from the World Cup qualifying round. Scotland continue to be a soccer power, but they will be having problems rebuilding."

He also points out that the Faroes and San Marino will play the part of the "spoilers" and will decide which two teams qualify.

LOU ECONOMOPOULOS

HUNGARY

Bekescsaba challenge

BEKESCSABA ended their autumn campaign with a deserved 2-0 win over Kispest-Honved, last season's champions, in Budapest.

One of the Bekescsaba players, Janos Argyelan, was voted Player of the Year as the provincial team finished within a point of half-time leaders Vac FC. So the chances of a title challenge were discussed seriously during the mid-winter break.

Jozsef Pasztor, manager of Bekescsaba, who turns 40 on March 20, may feel that life is only just beginning. He is not too experienced in management, but at least he knows that his most experienced players — Gyorgy Fabula, Mihaly Mracsko, Zoltan Szenti and Sandor Csato — have vital roles to play if the team are going to maintain their form.

"The young ones get tired in the head, as well as in the body, and so they can't concentrate on their ball technique," he says in bowing to the value of old heads.

"The older players can carry the load much better."

As to the finishing placings in June, he believes that the match between Vac and Kispest, in the opening round of the spring season, could tell much.

"If Vac win they can be champions, from Kispest, Ferenecvaros third, and fourth place could be ours."

Too much emphasis on the result of one match? A low-key assessment of his team's chances? Talk eminating from the country usually is frank but one can understand Pasztor's distaste for too much being made of Bekescsaba's rise last autumn automatically guaranteeing even more success this spring.

While Kispest have been plagued by illness and flu, they have taken on a Nigerian, Emeka Ezengo, known as Emmy, and a Ghanaian, Esekiel Alamu.

Vac signed Jozsef Dzurjak, the former Ferencvaros forward, from oddly-named III Keruleti TVE, the Second Division club. Dzurjak, now 32, was a consistent scorer for Fradi and helped his most recent club, one of the oldest in Hungary, to be in a position to challenge for promotion.

BRIAN O'SULLIVAN

POLAND

A bright start by Apostel

Aarau arrival . . . Poland's Cezary Kucharski.

NEW COACH Henryk Apostel had good reason to be satisfied with his first game in charge of the Poland squad.

The team did well to come from behind against Spain in Santa Cruz, Tenerife, and force a 1-1 draw, which made a pleasant change after the five successive defeats that completed the unsuccessful World Cup qualifying campaign.

The team — four substitutes were used — consisted almost entirely of home-based players, because very few of the "exiles" were available.

On the club front, 22-year-old striker Cezary Kucharski saved Siarka Tarnobrzeg from bankruptcy by "selling himself" to German manager Heinz Gruerel.

"I'll play for one of six clubs from Poland, Spain, Germany or Switzerland, but I don't know which," he said.

Eventually Gruerel sent him on loan to Swiss team Aarau, and Kucharski celebrated with a debut goal in a 2-1 win over Grasshopper.

Controversial former international Dariusz Dziekanowski also went to Switzerland, to have trials with Yverdon. Legia Warsaw ended his contract after he had twice returned to the team's hotel past midnight during a winter training camp.

DARIUSZ KUROWSKI

ALBANIA

So close at the top

FLAMURTARI led the table after 16 games, but the signs are that the battle is going to be extremely close.

In the past three seasons the title-winning club finished with a clear lead — five points last year, six in 1992 and 1991. Now only seven points separate the top 10 clubs, and more than a third of the 105 games had been drawn.

Teuta, the surprise runners-up last season, were third, three points behind Flamurtari and one behind Elbasani.

Dinamo's 3-1 win was their second, to go with 12 draws and two defeats. It was Tueta's first home defeat, as well.

Tirana beat last season's double winners, Partizani, with a goal by man-of-the-match Indrit Fortuzi, to take fourth place.

Dinamo, Tirana, Partizani and Teuta are all through to the Cup semi-finals.

GEZIM NUSHI

TABLES

ALBANIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Flamurtari	16	8	6	2	19	8	22
Elbasani	16	9	3	4	17	12	21
Teuta	16	6	7	3	21	9	19
Tirana	16	7	4	4	23	10	18
Partizani	16	5	7	4	18	13	17
Albpetrol	16	4	8	4	19	17	16
Vllaznia	16	6	4	6	15	16	16
Dinamo	16	2	12	2	15	16	16
Beselidhja	16	6	2	8	16	19	14
Lushnja	16	4	6	6	13	18	14
Apolonia	16	4	6	6	11	17	14
Laci	15	5	3	7	18	25	13
Sopoti	16	3	5	8	10	22	11
Besa	16	3	5	8	11	24	11

CYPRUS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Anorthosis	17	12	5	0	37	10	39
Apollon	17	12	2	3	43	17	38
Apoel	17	12	1	4	42	17	37
Ahna	17	12	1	4	43	16	37
Omonia	17	10	3	4	50	24	33
AEL	17	9	3	5	27	24	30
Pezoporikos	17	6	4	7	23	16	22
Paralimni	17	4	7	6	12	19	19
Salamina	17	4	6	7	16	20	18
Olympiakos	17	5	2	10	25	35	17
Aradipou	17	4	3	10	14	37	15
EPA	17	4	2	11	49	36	14
Evagoras	17	2	5	10	8	22	11
APEP	17	1	1	15	14	56	0

GREECE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AEK	25	18	3	4	47	18	57
Panathinaikos	25	16	3	6	60	30	51
Olympiakos	25	13	10	2	39	19	49
Aris	24	14	6	4	41	22	48
Levadiakos	25	10	7	8	32	30	37
OFI	24	10	5	9	45	29	35
Iraklis	25	9	8	8	42	33	35
Xanthi	25	8	8	9	41	45	32
Doxa	24	9	5	10	28	41	32
Panionios	25	8	5	12	38	44	29
Larissa	25	7	7	11	34	42	28
Edessaikos	24	8	4	12	32	43	28
Kalamaria	25	7	6	12	30	42	27
Apollon	25	6	9	10	21	34	27
Athinaikos	25	6	6	13	20	38	24
Panahaiki	25	5	7	13	25	45	22
Naoussa	25	4	1	20	29	59	13

ISRAEL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Mac Tel Aviv	24	19	3	2	58	17	60
Mac Haifa	24	18	6	0	54	15	60
Hap Beersheba	24	13	6	5	35	20	45
Bet Jerusalem	24	12	7	5	44	33	41
Mac Herzliya	24	8	7	9	25	25	31
Mac Hetanya	24	8	6	10	42	45	30
Hap Holon	24	7	9	8	28	33	30
Hap Tel Aviv	24	9	3	12	33	39	30
Bnei Yehuda	24	8	4	12	26	40	28
Hap Petah Tikva	24	7	6	11	30	34	27
Mac Petah Tikva	24	6	7	11	18	30	25
Ironi Ashdod	24	6	6	12	32	33	24
Hap Kfar Sava	24	4	7	13	19	38	19
Hap Haifa	24	2	7	15	15	56	13

MALTA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hibernians	11	9	2	0	26	4	20
Floriana	11	7	3	1	15	3	17
Valletta	11	7	2	2	25	8	16
Hamrun Spartans	11	5	6	0	16	4	16
Sliema Wanderers	11	3	3	5	8	10	9
Birkirkara	11	4	0	7	10	20	8
Zurrieq	10	3	2	5	6	13	8
St Andrews	11	3	1	7	11	20	7
Rabat Ajax	11	1	4	6	6	23	6
Mqabba	10	0	1	9	0	18	1

PORTUGAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Benfica	20	15	4	1	45	17	34
Sporting	20	14	3	3	34	13	31
FC Porto	20	11	6	3	34	12	28
Boavista	20	11	2	7	31	19	24
Maritimo	20	8	6	6	26	24	22
Guimaraes	20	7	7	6	17	15	21
Amadora	20	6	8	6	23	20	20
Salgueiros	20	9	2	9	29	31	20
Farense	20	9	1	10	27	35	19
Gil Vicente	20	6	7	7	30	30	19
Belenenses	20	7	4	9	24	32	18
Pacos Ferreira	20	5	8	7	19	24	18
Braga	20	5	6	9	18	19	16
Uniao	20	6	4	10	24	32	16
Beira Mar	20	5	5	10	14	20	15
Setubal	20	6	3	11	32	30	15
Famalicao	20	5	4	11	16	39	14

TURKEY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Galatasaray	18	14	2	2	44	18	44
Fenerbahce	18	12	5	1	39	18	41
Besiktas	18	10	4	4	34	15	34
Trabzonspor	17	9	5	3	31	17	32
Samsunspor	17	9	5	3	29	21	32
Kocaelispor	18	8	4	6	28	28	28
Bursaspor	18	7	5	6	20	20	26
Genclerbirligi	17	7	3	7	31	31	24
Kayserispor	18	7	3	8	20	25	24
Gaziantepspor	18	6	3	9	33	33	21
Zeytinburnuspor	18	5	4	9	17	27	19
Karsiyaka	18	5	2	11	12	23	17
Ankaragucu	18	4	4	10	23	35	16
Sariyer	18	4	4	10	13	26	16
Altay	18	3	4	11	18	29	13
Karabukspor	18	2	5	11	15	41	11

AUSTRIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Salzburg	21	13	4	4	29	9	30
Austria Wien	21	15	0	6	43	24	30
Admira Wacker	21	10	7	4	28	21	27
Innsbruck	21	9	7	5	29	19	25
Rapid Wien	21	7	6	8	21	24	20
VfB Modling	21	6	7	8	19	28	19
Vorwarts Steyr	21	6	6	9	30	26	18
Sturm Graz	21	6	5	10	20	29	17
St Polten	21	5	3	13	20	36	13
Sportclub	21	2	7	12	11	34	11

BELGIUM

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Anderlecht	26	17	6	3	58	26	40
Club Brugge	26	14	11	1	35	15	39
Seraing	26	13	9	4	44	22	35
Charleroi	26	15	4	7	48	33	34
Antwerp	26	12	9	5	39	30	33
Standard	26	10	9	7	30	17	29
Oostend	26	7	13	6	35	33	27
Mechelen	26	7	12	7	29	31	26
Lommel	26	8	9	9	33	34	25
Ekeren	26	8	8	10	36	36	24
Beveren	26	7	9	10	32	34	23
Cercle Bruges	26	7	9	10	41	49	23
Gent	26	6	10	10	37	44	22
FC Liege	26	6	10	10	27	44	21
Lierse	26	5	11	10	24	33	21
RWD Molenbeek	26	6	7	13	24	35	19
Waregem	26	4	6	16	24	49	14
Genk	26	3	7	16	31	62	13

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ajax	23	19	2	2	62	15	40
Feyenoord	21	14	6	1	42	15	34
PSV Eindhoven	23	11	8	4	42	22	30
Vitesse	23	13	2	8	48	26	28
NAC Breda	23	12	4	7	46	31	28
Roda JC	22	11	4	7	34	25	26
Willem II	23	10	5	8	36	27	25
FC Twente	22	9	6	7	29	23	24
MVV	22	8	6	8	32	38	22
Sparta	23	7	7	9	34	35	21
GA Eagles	23	9	3	11	32	36	21
VVV	23	6	8	9	22	38	20
FC Utrecht	23	7	5	11	27	46	19
Heerenveen	23	6	7	10	21	42	19
Groningen	22	5	5	12	27	49	15
Volendam	23	5	3	15	27	45	13
Cambuur	22	3	5	14	17	40	11
RKC	22	2	6	14	21	46	10

SWITZERLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Grasshopper	3	2	0	1	8	4	20
Sion	3	0	2	1	5	6	18
Servette	3	1	2	0	6	5	17
Aarau	3	2	1	0	5	3	16
Young Boys	3	0	2	1	2	6	15
Lugano	3	1	1	1	3	3	14
Lausanne	3	1	0	2	5	6	14
Lucerne	3	0	2	1	4	5	13

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Section A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cork City	26	14	6	5	48	27	48
Shamrock Rov	26	15	3	8	47	26	48
Galway Utd	26	12	7	7	39	30	43
Shelbourne	25	10	8	7	34	29	38
Derry City	26	10	8	8	29	26	38
Bohemians	26	10	7	9	28	25	37
Section B							
Dundalk	26	8	11	7	28	21	35
Monaghan Utd	26	9	6	11	30	31	33
St Patrick's	26	7	11	8	25	26	32
Cobh Ramblers	26	6	6	14	23	37	24
Limerick	26	5	8	13	18	43	23
Drogheda Utd	26	6	5	15	20	48	23

NORTHERN IRELAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Portadown	21	16	4	1	57	12	52
Linfield	20	16	2	2	47	15	50
Glenavon	20	16	1	3	50	21	49
Crusaders	20	13	3	4	41	20	42
Bangor	21	10	3	8	36	37	33
Cliftonville	20	8	6	6	31	21	30
Coleraine	21	8	6	7	29	31	20
Distillery	20	8	5	7	32	28	29
Glentoran	21	7	5	9	33	30	26
Ballyclare	20	6	3	11	26	44	21
Ards	20	6	2	12	38	44	20
Omagh Town	21	5	3	13	26	47	18
Carrick	20	4	5	11	31	52	17
Ballymena	20	4	3	13	25	48	15
Larne	20	3	5	12	23	44	14
Newry Town	19	1	6	12	10	41	9

WALES

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Inter Cardiff	21	17	1	3	60	26	52
Ton Pentre	20	14	4	2	42	15	46
Bangor	22	14	3	5	47	19	45
Cwmbran	22	11	4	7	32	26	37
Ebbw Vale	20	11	3	6	38	32	36
Porthmadog	24	10	5	9	57	39	35
Aberystwyth	20	10	4	6	31	25	34
Conwy	22	10	4	8	38	37	34
Holywell	20	10	3	7	45	34	33
Newtown	20	10	2	8	28	30	32
Flint Town	18	8	4	6	33	27	28
Connah's Quay	21	7	6	8	29	27	27
Caersws	21	6	7	8	25	31	25
Haverfordwest	21	6	3	12	27	48	21
Maesteg Park	22	5	5	12	32	45	20
Llansantffraid	24	5	4	15	25	47	19
Briton Ferry	21	4	6	11	36	49	18
Mold	22	5	3	14	34	55	18
Afran Lido	21	4	5	12	31	46	17
Llanelli	18	4	2	12	27	58	14

WORLD PRESS

READERS are unlikely to be visiting the Isles of Scilly in the near future. But in case you are, and you want to experience the local football for yourself, there is a game next Sunday, kick-off 10.30. But please don't expect a seat in the stands.

Last Sunday at 10.30, Garrison Gunners were due to play Woolpack Wanderers. They will also be playing each other next Sunday at 10.30, and the Sunday after that, and the Sunday after that. Some of the games are league matches, some are cup matches — but they all have the same players, the same spectators, and the same pitch.

The pitch is a tree-fringed field just behind an old fortress on St Mary's, one of the Isles of Scilly, 40 kilometres west of Land's End, off Cornwall in south-west England.

There Garrison Gunners and Woolpack Wanderers contest what they claim to be the smallest regular championship in the world.

But there is nothing silly about the Scilly Championship, fiercely disputed as it is by the 30 footballers living on the island. And just as serious is the Foredeck's Cup and the Daily Mirror Cup, even if a knock-out system is impossible for a cup tournament with only two teams and the home and away matches all played on the same pitch.

The Atlantic weather can be rough on these islands of 2,000 inhabitants, but it can also be sublimely sub-tropical. Club president John Young takes no chances. He has built his own grandstand at the Garrison Ground so he can follow the Sunday morning action from the comfort of his presidential box.

The world "box" is in fact a more appropriate one than "grandstand", for there is little grand about the flimsy wood and plastic construction which John Young keeps in a shed and erects just before kick-off, complete with publicity for his favourite beer and his own butcher's shop. It only has room for the president — just. But it is, as John Young enjoys pointing out, one of the very few all-seater stadia in Britain.

The Scilly season begins in August. The two team captains meet to pick their squads for the season from the reservoir of talent available. Any dispute over who has first choice to the best goalkeeper is settled by an arbitrary toss of the coin. There is an annual £15 subscription fee from each team, £80 ground rent to pay the land-owner (none other than Prince Charles, the Duke of Cornwall), and by October the action begins. The Scillies hold their breath.

In charge of all the games is one or other of the island's two referees, one a policeman, the other a shopkeeper. Every Monday evening they meet in the village pub with John Young, the club secretary and the two captains, to deal with disciplinary matters. The most frequent punishment is a £3 fine, for too many red cards and suspensions would leave the teams short of players — and no more matches.

Three times a season the players travel overseas. Weather permitting, they sail to Tresco, the garden island of the archipelago, to play the locals in a showdown on the manicured lawns of Prince Charles's helicopter pad.

It is the closest the Gunners and the Wanderers and their butcher president and their policeman referee will ever come to playing in Europe, apart from the occasional visit by a curious touring team (in other words, from Cornwall). But no-one complains: life in the Scilly sunshine is too pleasant.

— Etienne Bonamy

FIFA MAGAZINE

A BOLA (Portugal)

TERRY VENABLES . . .

an extremely ambitious figure. One does not know any more if he is a football man or a man of many little corners in business.

We are still seeing him entering the stadium leading Barcelona in the European Cup Final against Steaua Bucharest. He had it in his pocket, had he not? Two hours later, everything ended in tears, just like his time at Tottenham.

A man with millions of business ideas in his head can never be stable and clear in discharging his responsibilities as a football manager.

— Astregildo Silva

KICKER sportmagazine (Germany)

IT IS being used in many European countries, though it has been tried and rejected by some; the controversial system of three points for a win.

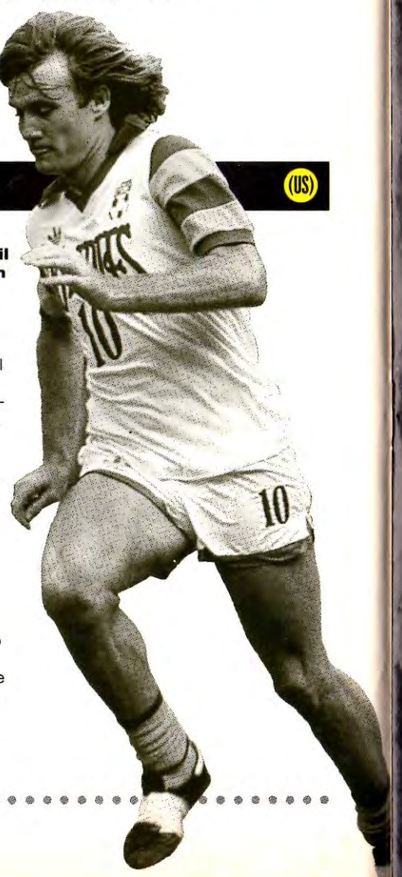
During the World Cup tournament in the US this method will for the first time be tested world-wide. And it will be introduced in the next European Championship qualifying groups.

But a poll among the 18 Bundesliga team managers revealed a mixed reaction. History proves that the three-point system would not have resulted in different placings in World Cup finals and in the European Championship qualifiers. The only exception would have occurred in the World Cup in Sweden in 1958. Then the Soviet Union, who beat England in a decider, would not have needed that play-off, for they would have amassed more points.

In the Bundesliga, however, there would have been two different champions if this method was operating. In the relegation issues there would twice have been different teams going down. The majority of our managers insist that the system propagated by the English should first be tested in the World Cup and European Championship before we follow suit.

One of the great attractions of the game is the simplicity of its rules. Tampering with these doesn't always improve the product.

TAMPA TRIBUNE (US)



TAMPA BAY ROWDIES kept kicking until the very end, but couldn't score when it counted most.

After a failed courtship with a group of Jacksonville investors, Rowdies owner Cornelia Corbett announced that the financially-strapped club will not field an American Professional Soccer League team this year.

Rowdies were the oldest continually operating professional soccer franchise in North America, dating back to the North American Soccer League's initial season in 1975. Crowds that once were more than 50,000 had dwindled to about 1,000 in recent years.

Corbett refused to say the Rowdies were through for ever, but chances of the team being revived appear slim.

"I'm proud of what I've accomplished, and I'm proud of my efforts. I think we deserved to see it succeed."

Chief executive Rodney Marsh (right), who has been with the team as a player, coach and general manager since the NASL days, said it will be hard to let go of the memories.

"From a personal standpoint, it's very sad because it appears to be the end of an era. Only time will tell what's going to happen.

"The Rowdies are synonymous with professional soccer in this country."

— Jay D. Preble

WORLD CUP USA94 COUNTDOWN

OUR INDISPENSABLE GUIDE TO THE 15TH WORLD CUP FINALS TOURNAMENT CONTINUES WITH PROFILES OF COLOMBIA, GERMANY, GREECE, HOLLAND, ITALY AND MEXICO PLUS A LOOK AT THE LATEST NEWS FROM THE UNITED STATES — WHERE TENSIONS BETWEEN BORA MILUTINOVIC'S HOME-BASED PLAYERS AND HIS EUROPEAN STARS ARE MOUNTING.

LATEST FROM THE US

BY PAUL GARDNER

Bora feels a cold blast

THE sheltered, almost charmed, life that coach Bora Milutinovic and his United States World Cup team have been living is coming to an end.

The harsh realities of media criticism, internal squabbles, and rumours of dissatisfaction among the Federation biggies are beginning to make themselves felt.

The year started pretty well, with exhibition games scheduled against other World Cup qualifiers, a victory over Norway and draws with Russia and Switzerland.

Then came the Joe Robbie Cup in Miami. The warning light gleamed clearly in a 1-1 draw with Bolivia, in which the US were outplayed and lucky to survive. Then Sweden — fielding hardly any of their expected World Cup starters — romped to a 3-1 victory over the Americans.

Where the Bolivians had exposed weaknesses in the American defence, the Swedes tore it to shreds.

The headlines in the local Florida newspapers were unusually critical: "US Panic Draws Near" wrote one, while another warned of a "Strategy Dispute Between Players and Coach."

Not so much a dispute as a search for excuses. Ironically, assistant coach Timo Liekoski had given a gung-ho pre-tournament talk to the media, in which he stressed the solidity of the US defence.

After the debacle, players were heard criticising the way in which Milutinovic liked to rely on the offside trap. The instructions, apparently, were too difficult to carry out, and made more so by Milutinovic's constant shuffling of personnel.

The return of sweeper Marcelo Balboa, who had been out for eight months recovering from a knee ligament tear, was one of the changes.

"Maybe I made a mistake, playing him in both games," admitted Milutinovic.

A bigger error was to shift erstwhile sweeper Desmond Armstrong to left-back, where he looked anything but comfortable. The biggest error was to retain Alexi Lalas (below) at right-back, where he plays as though he were still on his college team.

Brad Friedel, presently the No. 2 goalkeeper to Tony Meola, suffered through the Sweden game, and later remarked: "I just don't believe this is the way to go."

The criticism sounds inoffensive enough, but coming from one of the young Americans — a breed never known for questioning the coach — it has almost the roll of thunder. Another, more clearly definable, storm is brewing for Milutinovic at the team's permanent training site in Mission Viejo. What once looked so obvious and sensible for the US World Cup team now appears anything but straightforward.

The idea of Mission Viejo was to give the home-based players a full-time training area (what else could they do with no pro league to play in?) while overseas, in Europe mostly, the rest of the team played with their foreign clubs and would come home to play whenever they could.

The clear implication was that the best players were in Europe and would get into the US team as soon as they arrived.

That may still be true, but don't try telling it to the 20-plus players in Mission Viejo. They've been playing plenty of games without the Europeans, and (certainly until the Joe Robbie fiasco) they haven't done too badly.

And they're beginning to resent the overhanging threat of the European-based players.

Coventry City's Roy Wegerle didn't make any friends in California when he was quoted as saying there was a big gap between the players based in Europe and those in Mission Viejo.

There is evidently a feeling growing in Mission Viejo that Milutinovic should stick with the team he is using most of the time — and that inevitably means a team without the usually unavailable Europeans.

The problem caused Milutinovic to spring a surprise with his selection for the team to play Germany in December. A top game, against the world's top team, and Milutinovic deliberately ignored the Europeans and put his youngsters out.

Now, what was this? Milutinovic telling the Mission Viejo players he has faith in them? Letting the Europeans know that they'll have to fight for their places? Simply pretending to do either or both of those things? Any, all, or none of the above.

However hard done by the Mission Viejo players may feel, it is difficult to see more than three or four of them making the final team.

The World Cup is not an arena for young players brought up on college soccer and exhibition games.

That lesson was embarrassingly driven home at Italia '90.

There are still plenty of cock-eyed optimists around in American soccer who learned nothing from that calamity. Fortunately for America, they are not running the team.

Milutinovic is — and he, for all his concessions to the Mission Viejo inmates, must know the truth of the matter.

Any doubts he may have had were swept away by Bolivia and Sweden.

WORLD CUP FINALS RECORDS

COLOMBIA
Final appearances: 2 (1962, 1990).
Best performance: second round (1990).
Biggest win: 2-0 v UAE (1990).
Biggest defeat: 5-0 v Yugoslavia (1962).
Record: P87 W1 D2 L4 F9 A15

GERMANY
Final appearances: 12 (1934, 1938, 1954-90).
Best performance: winners 1954, 1974, 1990.
Biggest win: 7-2 v Turkey (1954).
Biggest defeat: 8-3 v Hungary (1854).
Record: P68 W39 D15 L14 F145 A90

GREECE
First appearance in finals.

HOLLAND
Final appearances: 5 (1934-38, 1974-78, 1990).
Best performance: runners-up 1974, 1978.
Biggest win: 5-1 v Austria (1978).
Biggest defeat: 3-0 v Czechoslovakia (1938).
Record: P20 W8 D6 L6 F35 A23

ITALY
Final appearances: 12 (1934-54, 1962-90).
Best performance: winners 1934, 1938, 1982.
Biggest win: 7-1 v United States (1934).
Biggest defeat: 4-1 v Switzerland (1954), 4-1 v Brazil (1970).
Record: P54 W31 D12 L11 F89 A54

MEXICO
Final appearances: 9 (1930, 1950-70, 1978, 1986).
Best performance: quarter-finalists 1970, 1986.
Biggest win: 4-0 v El Salvador (1970).
Biggest defeat: 6-0 v West Germany (1978).
Record: P29 W6 D6 L17 F27 A64

COLOMBIA

Time for a change

Maturana's squad need to prove themselves

BY KEITH SMITH

THE 5-0 victory over Argentina in Buenos Aires on September 5 last year not only ensured Colombian qualification for the World Cup (for the second consecutive time and the third ever) but marked the biggest triumph in Colombian sporting history.

The celebrations, which sadly caused the deaths of scores of fans, culminated in the President of the Republic, Cesar Gaviria, welcoming the squad home in front of 40,000 fans. All this for getting through a qualifying tournament.

The win put the Colombians alongside the Argentinians and Brazilians at the forefront of South American football.

While Colombia have been recognised as one of the most attractive international sides on the continent, they have not actually won anything. At club level only Nacional of Medellin have carried off South America's biggest club prize, the Copa Libertadores, in 1989.

National coach Francisco Maturana takes much of the credit for Colombia's success. Originally he built up the national side during his first term in charge between 1987 and 1990. After the World Cup that year he resigned and headed for club football in Spain, with Valladolid.

He was there long enough to establish a reputation as a good coach before he returned to Colombia, and in December 1992 he resumed his position as coach to the international side.

Maturana, who probably could have enjoyed a less stressful life, brought in Hernan Dario Gomez as his assistant.

Gomez had served as No. 2 at both club and international level before, but after Maturana's departure he had taken his place as coach at Nacional.

Additionally he took over the international side in 1992, and presided over the disaster that was the 1992 Olympics for the Colombian side. The fiasco in Spain persuaded Gomez that he did not fancy the international job, so he quit, only to get the call from Maturana.

Several weeks back in the old job, Maturana tried to quit, leaving the position for Gomez, but then changed his mind.

At the time he cited the differences in playing style between Nacional Medellin and America Cali, and while it is true that Nacional are perhaps a bit more aggressive and dynamic than America, there is not much in it.

Besides which, Colombia had some fine results under the old partnership in 1993 — a vital draw on a waterlogged pitch in Paraguay during the World Cup qualifiers, as well as beating Argentina twice (with the win in Barranquilla probably being even more impressive than that in Buenos Aires). The results look even better than Argentina's subsequent World Cup qualification and defeat of Germany.

With the same coaching team as at Italia '90, Colombia's playing style remains unaltered, with a flat back-four in front of a more conservative goalkeeper, with the two full-backs encouraged to get forward as much as possible. The two defensive midfielders augment the full-backs. Two attacking midfielders, given the freedom to roam, support the two front players.

The emphasis is on midfield, with short passing and pressing tactics employed when the opposition have the ball. The hub of the side is still Carlos Valderrama, with much of the old cast also intact.

Half the squad from 1990 make it to the US. Not only that, but half a dozen of the newer faces played together in the qualifiers and then the Olympic tournament proper.

There will be a concentration of players from Colombia's three most powerful clubs, Nacional, America and Junior Barranquilla. With both Nacional and America having failed to qualify for the Copa Libertadores, there will be fewer distractions.

Relatively few players are based abroad, so the potential is there for an intensive period of training. Faustino Asprilla (left) will get most of the headlines, but Valderrama — now recovering from a knee injury sustained in a friendly against Sweden, when he was sent off — is Maturana's key man.

In the United States, the Colombians are likely to find conditions favourable, having played nearly as many games there since 1988 as they have at home.

But they should approach the tournament with care. After playing so well in the build-up to the 1992 Olympics (where they were hoping to win a medal) the team failed dismally.

In preparation for the World Cup qualifiers, the full international side lost to Brazil's youth side, and their preparations looked a shambles.

In the past, high expectations have merely preceded disappointment. And this time the Colombians have not landed an easy draw.

Unlike four years ago, there is no side considerably weaker than the rest. Romania, Switzerland and the United States are all perfectly capable of beating the Colombians.

Key Colombian figures . . . Carlos Valderrama (right) and Leonel Alvarez (above right).

'While Colombia have been recognised as one of the most attractive international teams in South America, they have not won anything'

1994 WORLD CUP SCHEDULE

FIRST ROUND

GROUP A

UNITED STATES
SWITZERLAND
COLOMBIA
ROMANIA

18.06.94	US v Switzerland	Detroit
18.06.94	Colombia v Romania	LA
22.06.94	Romania v Switzerland	Detroit
22.06.94	US v Colombia	LA
26.06.94	US v Romania	LA
26.06.94	Switzerland v Colombia	S. Francisco

HOW THEY QUALIFIED

SOUTH AMERICA

GROUP A

01.08.93	**Colombia** v Paraguay	0-0
01.08.93	Peru v Argentina	0-1
08.08.93	Paraguay v Argentina	1-3
08.08.93	Peru v **Colombia**	0-1
15.08.93	**Colombia** v Argentina	2-1
15.08.93	Paraguay v Peru	2-1
22.08.93	Argentina v Peru	2-1
22.08.93	Paraguay v **Colombia**	1-1
29.08.93	Argentina v Paraguay	0-0
29.08.93	**Colombia** v Peru	4-0
05.09.93	Argentina v **Colombia**	0-5
05.09.93	Peru v Paraguay	2-2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
COLOMBIA	6	4	2	0	13	2	10
Argentina	6	3	1	2	7	9	7
Paraguay	6	1	4	1	6	7	6
Peru	6	0	1	5	4	12	1

the COACH

Francisco MATURANA. Aged 45 (born February 15, 1949). A former defender who gained six caps in 1981. Spent most of his 10-year playing career with Nacional Medellin, later moving to Bucaramanga and Tolima. Was prepared to start his own dental practice in 1983 before he received a call to coach Nacional's youth side. In 1986 he took over the professional side Cristal Caldas, then Nacional, and Colombia in 1987. Nacional won the 1989 Copa Libertadores, and the Colombians qualified for the 1990 World Cup. After that he joined America Cali, and duly won his first League title with them before resuming with the national side. Awarded the Cruz de Boyaca, the highest honour from the Colombian government, after the win over Argentina. A member of the constitutional assembly.

the SQUAD

Oscar CORDOBA. Goalkeeper. Aged 24 (born February 3, 1970) with 15 caps. America Cali. Former youth international. Started at Deportivo Cali, who subsequently loaned him to Nacional (where he made his debut in 1988). Then with Quindio, Millonarios and latterly Once Phillips, where he revived a faltering career before signing for America Cali.

Farid MONDRAGON. Goalkeeper. Aged 22 (born June 21, 1971) with 2 caps. Argentinos Juniors (Arg). Professional debut with Deportivo Cali in 1991. Subsequently with Sporting Barranquilla, Real Cartagena, Cerro Porteno (Paraguay) and Argentinos Juniors.

Luis HERRERA. Defender. Aged 31 (born June 12, 1962) with 45 caps. Nacional Medellin. Colombia's mainstay since 1987, the year that Maturana made him his first signing at Nacional, from America Cali. Pro debut in 1983 with Medellin before switching to Bucaramanga. He became a national figure after his son was kidnapped in the post-qualification aftermath. The boy was quickly recovered.

Wilson PEREZ. Defender. Aged 26 (born August 9, 1967) with 31 caps (1 goal). America Cali. Excluded from the last World Cup squad for disciplinary reasons. Originally with Junior Barranquilla.

Luis Carlos PEREA. Defender. Aged 30 (born December 29, 1963) with 64 caps (2 goals). Independiente Medellin. Big man at the centre of Colombia's back four. He ought to break Arnoldo Iguaran's international appearance record of 68 during the build-up.

Alexis MENDOZA. Defender. Aged 33 (born November 8, 1961) with 33 gaps (1 goal). Junior. Perea's centre-back partner during the whole of 1993, and will be difficult to dislodge.

Andres ESCOBAR. Defender. Aged 26 (born March 13, 1967) with 35 caps (1 goal). Nacional. An international since 1988. Signed for Young Boys Berne in 1990, but could not adapt and eventually returned home.

Gabriel Jaime GOMEZ. Midfielder. Aged 34 (born December 8, 1959) with 35 caps (1 goal). Nacional. An irregular international since his debut in 1985. Hernan Dario's brother.

Leonel ALVAREZ. Midfielder. Aged 28 (born July 29, 1965) with 58 caps (1 goal). America Cali. Tremendous worker and competitor with good technique, even if he lacks pace — not helped by a serious leg injury in 1992.

Alexis GARCIA. Midfielder. Aged 33 (born July 21, 1960) with 24 caps (2 goals). Nacional. Made his name with Once Caldas in 1980, to earn a spot in the 1980 Olympic team. Excluded from the World Cup in 1990.

Carlos VALDERRAMA. Midfielder. Aged 32 (born September 2, 1961) with 56 caps (5 goals). Junior. Captain, and the undoubted leader on the pitch, a distinctive figure with his flowing dreadlocks. His career took off in 1985, the year of his full international debut. South American Footballer of the Year in 1987. Rather slow of foot and a poor finisher, but has superb technique.

Fredy RINCON. Midfielder. Aged 27 (born August 14, 1966) with 39 caps (11 goals). America Cali. Signed by Brazilians Palmeiras at the end of 1993. Became a national figure after his game-saving goal against West Germany in 1990. Good pace, and ball skills.

Faustino ASPRILLA. Forward. Aged 24 (born November 10, 1969) with 10 caps (3 goals). Parma (Ita). Drifted to a physical education college with a reputation for producing footballers, and was signed by Cucuta, one of Colombia's smaller sides. After 15 games, Nacional picked him up for $100,000 in 1989, virtually un-noticed. Exploded on to the domestic scene at the end of 1991, and Parma paid $4million for him.

John TRELLEZ. Forward. Aged 25 (born April 29, 1968) with 18 caps (2 goals). Nacional. Looked like being Colombia's forward of the 1990s when he came on the scene in 1987, but has yet to make that final step up. Nacional's all-time leading scorer.

Ivan Rene VALENCIANO. Forward Aged 21 (born March 18, 1972) with 7 caps (2 goals). Junior. A lot has been expected of him since he turned professional in 1988. International debut in 1991, the season he scored more than 30 League goals. But he returned to Junior in 1993.

Victor ARISTIZIBAL. Forward. Aged 22 (born December 9, 1971) with 11 caps (2 goals). Nacional. More of an attacking midfielder, giving a few more tactical options.

Miguel GUERRERO. Forward. Aged 26 (born September 7, 1967) with 5 caps (1 goal). Junior. Back in the running for a place after winning the Colombian scoring title for 1993.

Adolfo VALENCIA. Forward. Aged 26 (born February 6, 1968) with 16 caps (8 goals). Bayern Munich (Ger). Nicknamed "The train" and one of the most prolific scorers in Santa Fe's history until the club were forced to sell, but has struggled to adapt to the conditions in Germany.

GERMANY

Living with a burden

Vogts faces an enormous task

BY ARTHUR ROTMIL

GERMANY'S national team managers have had to put up with extraordinary pressure and stress for the past 40 years. And it is no different for Berti Vogts, who took over as Bundestrainer after the victorious World Cup four years ago.

Ever since the Germans, against all odds, won their first World Cup in 1954, fans and media have expected them to repeat this success, or at least become European champions.

The introduction of full-time professional football and the creation of the first national league, the Bundesliga, in 1963, unquestionably have helped to turn Germany into the world's leading football power.

The national side now have the best record of any country: three times world champions and three times runners-up, twice European champions and twice runners-up. These performances have raised the hopes of the millions of fans before every major tournament, and this is the burden that Vogts has to live with.

He managed a highly-commendable second place at the European Championship two years ago, but now he is expected to retain the World Cup.

Every one of his predecessors — Sepp Herberger, Helmut Schoen, Jupp Derwall and Franz Beckenbauer — won the World Cup, or the European Championship, or both.

In the middle of last year Vogts thought that he had found his ideal formation. The Germans won the prestigious US Cup against Brazil, England and the US in some style. But six months later there appeared ominous cracks in most parts of the projected formation.

Andy Kopke is no longer undisputed No. 1 goalkeeper — Bodo Illgner has been more impressive. Guido Buchwald, lately less effective as a man-marker, has been moved up to midfield, while captain Lothar Matthaus has become the new libero. Veteran Andy Brehme has returned to his role of outside half-cum-full-back.

The attack that seemed the strongest component of the side is anything but. Both Jurgen Klinsmann and Karlheinz Riedle have recently lost form. The most valuable attacker is now Andy Moller, whose best position is just behind the two strikers.

Vogts maintains that the strike force is not a worry: "The forwards have to get used to Moller's new role, that's all. I feel confident that Klinsmann and Riedle will soon regain their best form. I have pencilled in nine names as first choices."

Any other problems, Vogts claims, will be eradicated in the remaining matches before the finals. He is not afraid to experiment, as he demonstrated by picking five newcomers in the last six internationals of 1993.

The world champions clearly missed the competitive involvement of World Cup qualifying ties. As holders they go to America automatically, and are seeded. Their group opponents, Spain, Bolivia and South Korea, should not stop them from progressing to the second round.

Germany are likely to keep faith with the recently-developed system of two man-markers with a libero behind, four men in midfield and Moller as a springboard, playing just behind the two attackers.

This style should ensure fluidity of movement, with the midfield "wingmen" dropping back to reinforce the defence, or alternately advancing to help their central partners and front men, and Vogts describing Matthaus and Moller as the axis and main driving force.

"We shall be very difficult to beat," he insists. "If we all concentrate fully on playing football."

His contract was to have been terminated with the World Cup, but it has been extended.

Many experts rate the Germans as World Cup favourites and this is underlined by the latest FIFA merit table. But Vogts has reservations: "I am not that arrogant to claim that we are the world's best. For me the Brazilians are the top dogs and World Cup favourites.

"We remain among the leading five nations, but we know we must improve."

The Berlin Wall . . . or part of it: Riedle, Sammer, Kohler, Effenberg, Klinsmann and Brehme.

First-choice again . . . Koln goalkeeper Bodo Illgner is back in favour.

'Every one of his predecessors – Sepp Herberger, Helmut Schoen, Jupp Derwall and Franz Beckenbauer – won the World Cup, or the European Championship, or both'

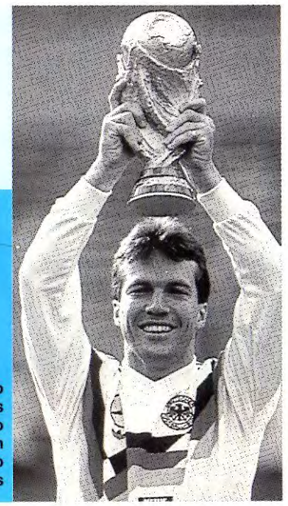
1994 WORLD CUP SCHEDULE

FIRST ROUND

GROUP C

GERMANY
BOLIVIA
SPAIN
SOUTH KOREA

17.06.94	Germany v Bolivia	Chicago
17.06.94	Spain v South Korea	Dallas
21.06.94	Germany v Spain	Chicago
23.06.94	South Korea v Bolivia	Boston
27.06.94	Bolivia v Spain	Chicago
27.06.94	Germany v South Korea	Dallas



the COACH

Hans-Hubert "Berti" VOGTS. Aged 47 (born December 30, 1946). In command since the 1990 World Cup after 11 years with the DFB, where he made his name as coach to the Under-21 team. As a player starred for Borussia Monchengladbach — five championships, one DFB Cup and two UEFA Cups. Twice Footballer of the Year. Gained 96 caps, once World Cup winner.

the SQUAD

Bodo ILLGNER. Goalkeeper. Aged 26 (born April 7, 1967) with 45 caps. Koln. After a super World Cup became inconsistent and was demoted. Now apparently first choice again.

Andreas KOPKE. Goalkeeper. Aged 32 (born March 12, 1962) with 13 caps. Nurnberg. Advanced to No. 1 after the '92 European Championships, but Nurnberg's poor form affected his performances.

Oliver KAHN. Goalkeeper. Aged 24 (born June 15, 1969) with no caps. Karlsruhe. Voted recently Germany's best keeper after superlative displays for Karlsruhe in the UEFA Cup. Will join Bayern Munich next season.

Jurgen KOHLER. Defender. Aged 28 (born October 6, 1965) with 60 caps. Juventus (Ita). Rated the best stopper in Europe, uncompromising tackler, durable, fast and commanding in the air.

Michael SCHULZ. Defender. Aged 32 (born September 3, 1961) with 7 caps. Borussia Dortmund. Versatile, reliable man-marker, previously with Kaiserslautern.

Lothar MATTHAUS. Defender. Aged 32 (born March 21, 1961) with 107 caps (19 goals). Bayern Munich. Captain, forceful and dynamic recently converted into a sweeper. Has won every honour: World Cup, World, European and Germany's Footballer of the Year, plus World Sportsman of the Year.

Christian ZIEGE. Defender. Aged 21 (born February 1, 1972) with 7 caps. Bayern Munich. The revelation of the US Cup triumph.

Thomas HELMER. Defender. Aged 28 (born April 21, 1965) with 22 caps. Bayern Munich. Consistent performer equally useful as a stopper, or libero. Came from Borussia Dortmund.

Thomas STRUNZ. Defender. Aged 25 (born April 25, 1968) with 8 caps. VfB Stuttgart. Strong ball-winner with mainly defensive qualities.

Stefan EFFENBERG. Midfielder. Aged 25 (born August 2, 1968) with 27 caps (four goals). Fiorentina (Ita). Last summer's relegation has not blunted the class of this talented schemer and prodigious free-kick expert.

Thomas HASSLER. Midfielder. Aged 27 (born May 20, 1966) with 45 caps (six goals). AS Roma (Ita). Brilliant technician with pace, vision and deadly from free-kicks. Star of the European Championship in 1992.

Guido BUCHWALD. Midfielder. Aged 33 (born January 24, 1961) with 70 caps (4 goals). VfB Stuttgart. Used mainly as man-marker, dependable in the tackle and in the air. Lately more effective in midfield.

Andreas BREHME. Defender. Aged 33 (born November 9, 1960) with 77 caps (8 goals). Kaiserslautern. One of the 1990 World Cup-winning heroes, rated the best full-back in the world. Prolific free-kick and penalty specialist, first capped in 1984.

Matthias SAMMER. Midfielder. Aged 26 (born September 5, 1967) with 19 caps (1 goal). Borussia Dortmund. Former East German international who joined Dortmund after an unhappy spell with Inter-Milan. Recently used with great effect as libero.

Maurizio GAUDINO. Midfielder. Aged 27 (born December 12, 1966) with 3 caps. Eintracht Frankfurt. Of Italian parents, but a German citizen at 16. Came from VfB Stuttgart, first capped this season v Tunisia.

Andreas MOLLER. Midfielder. Aged 26 (born September 2, 1967) with 36 caps (12 goals). Juventus (Ita). The outstanding player and most prolific striker this season. Also a clever schemer full of initiative.

Michael ZORC. Midfielder. Aged 31 (born August 25, 1962) with 7 caps. Borussia Dortmund. A strong tackler and valuable ball winner, this late developer is in his first year in the national team.

Jurgen KLINSMANN. Attack. Aged 29 (born July 30, 1964) with 56 caps (17 goals). AS Monaco (Fra). A speedy striker with excellent control and dribbling skill, though inconsistent lately.

Ulf KIRSTEN. Attack. Aged 28 (born December 4, 1965) with 9 caps (2 goals). Bayer Leverkusen. Former East German international (49 caps), last season's joint top scorer in the Bundesliga.

Karlheinz RIEDLE. Attack. Aged 28 (born September 16, 1965) with 36 caps (15 goals). Borussia Dortmund. On his day, a dangerous counter-attacker and brilliant header. But since returning from Italy lost form and goal touch.

Andreas THOM. Attack. Aged 28 (born September 7, 1965) with 9 caps (2 goals). Bayer Leverkusen. A consistent marksman; the first East German (capped 51 times) officially permitted to join a Bundesliga club, from Dynamo Berlin for £1million.

GREECE

Fox on the run

Surprises may not be over yet

LOU ECONOMOPOULOS

THE Greek Soccer Federation have decided that a fox by the name of Penelope will be the national team's mascot in their quest for World Cup glory. And that's no accident.

Just like a fox, the Greeks will be counting on wit, foresight and organised natural ability to take them beyond the first round, which is their initial goal.

And just like Penelope, who waited such a long time for Ulysses to return from his adventures while remaining loyal to him — as the poem by Homer tells us — so did the Greek team have to wait before finally making it to their first World Cup finals.

The squad have everything to gain in their first World Cup appearance. Inexperience will be the most significant problem, while the home crowd advantage provided by thousands of Greek-American supporters is perhaps the biggest help the team will have. Only the Italians are expected to have more supporters in the competition.

Coach Alketas Panagoulias does not have any world-class stars in his team. Only a handful of Greeks have ever been asked to play for teams abroad.

Now, however, an extra attribute . . . foxiness. Clever, gutsy play lifted the Greek team to the top position in their qualifying group, unbeaten. It all started with a 1-0 victory in Iceland on May 13, 1992 and ended with the 1-0 triumph over the Russians at home on November 17, 1993.

"I told you in Iceland to close your eyes as if in a dream and open them at the end of 1993, after the match with Russia, to see where you stand," Panagoulias told his team during practice in Salonica in mid-February.

"Today you see we are on a road of glory. Today you are the ambitious ambassadors not only of Greek soccer, but the country itself. Already your accomplishments are great.

"Your passion, your determination can measure more strength than any diplomatic effort. Our land is not negotiable, nor is our Greek sense of honour."

So after 68 years of waiting, the Greeks have made it to the World Cup finals. How far can they go? Small teams often pull off surprises in the World Cup, and Greece may well do the same. At least they will not finish 24th!

With the qualifying rounds now history, Panagoulias is busy getting his team together for the first match, with Argentina. He is gathering as much information as he can, studying opponents and showing videos to his players.

Although he has a good idea which players will be making the trip this summer, he insists that it is all up in the air.

"Right now, nobody knows, including me, which players are going," he said. "A number of things can change, such as injuries or loss of form.

"I am testing certain players from the national youth team as well, and still have time to decide on the squad. I'm not that concerned if certain players are not playing in their club teams.

"Remember that Tasos Mitropoulos was a key player for the national team when he was not a starter for AEK Athens."

Panagoulias will be taking a mixture of veteran and young players, and those who helped in the qualification will be his first choice.

The Soccer Federation, in co-operation with Panagoulias, have lined up some matches to help the team's preparations. Greece will face Poland on March 23, Saudi Arabia on April 27, and Bolivia, Cameroon and England in May. Greece's only claim to fame in international soccer was in 1980. Then, with Panagoulias having his first spell in charge, they reached the finals of the European Championship, holding West Germany to a 0-0 draw and losing only 1-0 to Holland.

In World Cup qualifying competition, Greece have won 21 times, drawn 13 and lost 30.

Overall, the international record reads: 92 wins, 72 draws and 149 defeats. The Greeks have scored 381 goals and conceded 550.

One thing is certain now. The Greeks will be trying to out-fox their opponents.

Old hand . . . Greece's second-most capped player, Dimitris Saravakos of Panathinaikos (left).

Strong man . . . the man-to-man marker in the Greek side, Yiannis Kalitzakis of Panathinaikos (below).

'The Greeks will be counting on wit, foresight and organised natural ability to take them beyond the first round, which is their initial goal'

Young gun . . . the youngest member of the Greek squad, Nikos Machlas of OFI Crete.

1994 WORLD CUP SCHEDULE

FIRST ROUND

GROUP D

ARGENTINA
GREECE
NIGERIA
BULGARIA

21.06.94	Argentina v Greece	Boston
21.06.94	Nigeria v Bulgaria	Dallas
25.06.94	Argentina v Nigeria	Boston
26.06.94	Bulgaria v Greece	Chicago
30.06.94	Greece v Nigeria	Boston
30.06.94	Argentina v Bulgaria	Dallas

HOW THEY QUALIFIED
EUROPE
GROUP 5

13.05.92	**Greece** v Iceland	1-0
03.06.92	Hungary v Iceland	1-2
09.09.92	Luxembourg v Hungary	0-3
07.10.92	Iceland v **Greece**	0-1
14.10.92	Russia v Iceland	1-0
28.10.92	Russia v Luxembourg	2-0
11.11.92	**Greece** v Hungary	0-0
17.02.93	**Greece** v Luxembourg	2-0
31.03.93	Hungary v **Greece**	0-1
14.04.93	Luxembourg v Russia	0-4
28.04.93	Russia v Hungary	3-0
20.05.93	Luxembourg v Iceland	1-1
23.05.93	Russia v **Greece**	1-1
02.06.93	Iceland v Russia	1-1
16.06.93	Iceland v Hungary	2-0
08.09.93	Hungary v Russia	1-3
08.09.93	Iceland v Luxembourg	1-0
12.10.93	Luxembourg v **Greece**	1-3
27.10.93	Hungary v Luxembourg	1-0
17.11.93	**Greece** v Russia	1-0

★ *Yugoslavia excluded due to UN sanctions.*

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
GREECE	8	6	2	0	10	2	14
RUSSIA	8	5	2	1	15	4	12
Iceland	8	3	2	3	7	6	8
Hungary	8	2	1	5	6	11	5
Luxembourg	8	0	1	7	2	17	1

the COACH

Alketas PANAGOULIAS. Aged 59. The most respected and successful national coach in Greek history. He has served from 1971-81 and from 1991 to date, although his permanent home is in the US, where he coached Team America in 1983 as well as the national team for the 1984 Olympics and the 1986 World Cup qualifying. At club level he coached Olympiakos to championships in 1982 and 1987.

the SQUAD

Antonis MINOU. Goalkeeper. Aged 35 (born May 4, 1958) with 13 caps. Apollon. Led AEK Athens to the championship last year. Now plays for Apollon and has starred for Panathinaikos. A serious athlete with a strong character.

Costas HANIOTANIS. Goalkeeper. Aged 25 (born July 19, 1968) with 5 caps. OFI Crete. Aggressive and daring. Full of potential, looked upon as Minou's replacement in the near future.

Stratos APOSTOLAKIS. Defender. Aged 29 (born May 11, 1964) with 55 caps (2 goals). Panathinaikos. Has had an outstanding career. Fast, skilled and experienced.

Kyriakos KARATAIDIS. Defender. Aged 28 (born July 4, 1965) with 13 caps. Olympiakos. One of the top man-to-man defenders in Greece, but has ability in other areas, making him a very precious player.

Thanasis KOLITSIDAKIS. Defender. Aged 27 (born November 21, 1966) with 9 caps. Apollon. Strong, fast, good header and very determined.

Stelios MANOLAS. Defender. Aged 32 (born July 13, 1961) with 64 caps (6 goals). AEK Athens. The backbone of AEK Athens, where he started his professional career and continues to play, as well as the national team. The veteran is the source of faith and enthusiasm for the rest of the team.

Yiannis KALITZAKIS. Defender. Aged 27 (born December 10, 1966) with 32 caps. Panathinaikos. Broke into pro soccer at 17. Strong, with excellent man-to-man skills.

Alexis ALEXIOU. Defender. Aged 31 (born September 8, 1962) with 6 caps. PAOK Salonika. Considered by many "the human wall," and just the man to resolve difficult situations.

Tasos MITROPOULOS. Midfielder. Aged 36 (born August 23, 1957) with 69 caps (7 goals). AEK Athens. Captain and the "old man" of the team, but passion, enthusiasm and determination make him an example and the moving force.

Nikos TSIANTAKIS. Midfielder. Aged 30 (born October 20, 1963) with 40 caps (2 goals). Olympiakos. Fast with strong penetration, and never stops running. An indispensable member of the team.

Yiotis TSALOUHIDIS. Midfielder. Aged 31 (born March 30, 1963) with 54 caps (12 goals). Olympiakos. Strong, hard running, excellent tackler and good in the air.

Nikos NIOPLIAS. Midfielder. aged 29 (born January 17, 1965) with 29 caps (1 goal). Panathinaikos. After 10 years with OFI Crete, joined Panathinaikos last summer and directs traffic in midfield with his artistic talent, running and excellent passing.

Costas ANTONIOU. Midfielder. Aged 31 (born April 19, 1962) with 34 caps (2 goals). Panathinaikos. A quiet player who gets things done without much fanfare. Excellent control, very experienced.

George TOURSOUNIDIS. Midfielder. Aged 23 (born August 21, 1970) with 5 caps. PAOK Salonika. Panagoulias thinks he is the top talent of the future in the national side.

Vasilis KARAPIALIS. Midfielder. Aged 28 (born June 13, 1965) with 22 caps (1 goal). Olympiakos. One of the most skilful players in the team, even when the going gets tough.

Savas KOFIDIS. Midfielder. Aged 32 (born March 1, 1961) with 59 caps (4 goals). Aris Salonika. Now a veteran, but one of the best Greek midfielders of all time.

Alexandros ALEXANDRIS. Attack. Aged 25 (born October 21, 1968) with 5 caps. AEK Athens. Helped AEK to consecutive championships in the past two seasons, and is leading them to the top of the table.

Dimitris SARAVAKOS. Attack. Aged 32 (born July 26, 1961) with 72 caps. Panathinaikos. Second only to Nikos Anastopoulos (74) for most Greek caps, and second top scorer in the League this season. Excellent free-kick expert and can score from far out.

Vasilis DIMITRIADIS. Attack. Aged 28 (born February 1, 1966) with 26 caps (3 goals). AEK Athens. Top scorer in the League in the last two seasons. In a slump this year, but Panagoulias is still counting on him.

Nikos MACHLAS. Attack. Aged 20 (born June 16, 1973) with 4 caps (2 goals). OFI Crete. Scored the winning goal against Russia giving Greece first place in qualifying group five. Youngest member of the squad.

Costas FRANTZESKOS. Attack. Aged 25 (born January 3, 1969) with 6 caps. Panathinaikos. A specialist at free-kicks. His technique and skill make him the strategist on the left side of the team.

THE MEN WHO MATTER

THE *WORLD SOCCER* COUNTDOWN TO THE 1994 WORLD CUP IN THE US CONTINUES WITH PROFILES OF THREE MORE VITAL MEN — A PROMISING YOUNG MOROCCAN FORWARD, A HARD-WORKING BELGIAN MIDFIELDER AND AN INFLUENTIAL RUSSIAN DEFENDER.

LORENZO **STAELENS**

Triathlon man

ENZO SCIFO's delicate touch and vision make him the brains of Belgium's midfield, but Lorenzo Staelens is the team's legs and lungs.

He is by no means the most technically accomplished of players, and owes his international status to grit, energy and exceptional tactical sense.

"Consistency is the key word when describing Lorenzo," says Belgium coach Paul Van Himst. "I can always be sure he'll give a satisfying display.

"He's strong in the tackle, uses the ball intelligently and never stops running. He and Franky Van Der Elst are the engine of the team.

"Many consider him only as a destructive player, but I do not agree. He has an excellent football brain and his attacking play is improving all the time.

"He scores his fair share of goals for Club Brugge, and he certainly showed a nice touch when he volleyed the opener in our World Cup qualifying victory over Wales in Brussels."

Staelens does not solely exploit his athleticism on a football pitch. Last summer he entered a triathlon — comprising long-distance swimming, cycling and running — and finished 10th from a field of 200, in his first attempt at the event.

"I had read a lot about the triathlon and wanted to see if I could meet the challenge," he said. "I enjoyed it, but I don't know if I will take part in another."

Staelens received considerably more publicity for this odd activity than he did for some of his international performances. While the Belgian media tend to focus on keeper Michel Preud'homme, stylish central defender Philippe Albert and schemer Enzo Scifo, Staelens often is overlooked.

"There is a tremendous spirit in the squad and the reason is Van Himst's laid-back personality," he says. "His attitude is that a football match is not a matter of life and death, and that keeps us relaxed.

"Paul is like a big brother. He is close to us all and we will do anything to get good results for him. We are unlikely to win the World Cup, but we have the potential to be quarter-finalists at the very least.

"I was a member of our Italia '90 squad, but played only one game. Eric Gerets was suspended and the manager, Guy Thys, gave me the job of replacing him against Spain. Now I hope to be more involved."

Lorenzo Staelens was born on April 30, 1964, in the Flemish town of Menen, and started his career with the minor league amateurs of White Star Lauwe.

"I was earning a living at a local post office and had given up hope of playing professionally," he says.

But when he was 23 his full-time dream was fulfilled. First Division KV Kortrijk signed him, and a soccer late developer was on his way. Over the next two seasons Staelens showed dynamic midfield work, plus 11 goals in 64 League matches. That earned him many admirers and in the summer of 1989 he was bought by Club Brugge.

Within a month he became a full international, too. New manager Walter Meeuws included him in his squad to face Denmark in a friendly in August 1989, and an hour into the game Staelens went on to replace Stephane Demol.

"I was delighted to play a small part in our 3-0 win," he recalls. "But I have to admit that circumstances helped me to make my debut. Mechelen were in a tournament in Barcelona, and Marc Emmers and Bruno Versavel were allowed to play for their club rather than go on international duty."

At Kortrijk, Staelens spent most of his time battling to avoid relegation. But with Club Brugge he could enjoy life at the Belgian summit.

He missed only three games as Brugge took the 1990 and 1992 league titles and a Cup-winners's medal was added to his collection.

During the past 30 years Belgium have produced a number of outstanding midfield anchor men. Martin Lippens and Jean Dockx of Anderlecht, plus Julien Cools and Rene Vandereycken of Club Brugge are only four of a dogged breed.

Lorenzo "Marathon Man" Staelens is the present-day upholder of that proud tradition.

NICK BIDWELL

PRO-FILE

LORENZO STAELENS

CLUB BRUGGE AND BELGIUM

Born: April 30, 1964, in Menen.

Previous clubs: White Star Lauwe, KV Kortrijk.

International debut: August 1989 v Denmark. Won 3-0.

International cups: 15 (1 goal).

First Division debut: August 1987 for KV Kortrijk v Racing Jet Brussels. Drew 1-1.

HONOURS

Belgian Championship: 1990, 1992.

Belgian Cup: 1991.

MUSTAPHA **HADJI**

Rapid riser

FEW 21-year-olds have been asked to make as tough a decision as Mustapha Hadji . . . given the choice between an international career with his native Morocco or the land where he grew up, France.

With a little hindsight, as Morocco head to the US for the World Cup finals while the French must ponder what might have been, his decision seems to have been wise. Striker Hadji, playing in the French Second Division with Nancy, was thrown into this unusual dilemma last September.

He had been chosen by Raymond Domenech, the former Lyon coach and now in charge of France's Under-21 side, for a European Championship match against Israel. At almost the same time, Morocco's new coach, Abdellah Blinda, had spotted his name among the list of scorers in a French magazine, and learned of Hadji's Moroccan roots. He invited the youngster to join Morocco's squad ahead of their vital World Cup decider with Zambia in October.

"I took a week to make up my mind," says Hadji of a period where his club, understandably, were pressing him to throw in his lot with France.

But eventually he decided to pull on the red and green of Morocco, and in Casablanca, as the Lions of the Atlas edged out Zambia 1-0 to clinch their place among the 24 finalists, Hadji made a sensational debut and emerged as the man of the match.

"Now I don't regret anything," he said after Abdelsalam Laghrisi's second-half goal ended Zambian hopes.

When a Moroccan TV reporter posed questions in Arabic, he replied in French. "I do not understand Arabic very well," he confessed after a bewildering week in a city where passion for the game overflows.

"It's difficult to comprehend everything but I certainly understood the overwhelming support we got from the stands. The fans were shouting my name. They really helped me to get through the match."

Hadji's name will be among the first Blinda will pencil in when he decides on his final 22 for the World Cup finals. Mustapha Hadji — the eldest of five sons and a daughter — was born on November 6, 1971, in Ifrane, near Agadir on the coast of Morocco.

Times were hard for his family and in 1984 they emigrated to the Moselle region of eastern France, where his father worked as a miner. "I did not play football seriously until I was 15," says Hadji. "Before then my main interest was boxing. But, in the end, I decided it was too violent."

Instead of taking punches, Hadji turned to soccer and during a junior match in 1988 he so impressed Nancy-Lorraine youth team coach Alain Perrin that he was immediately offered an apprenticeship.

"What first struck me about Mustapha was his dribbling skills," says Perrin. "He glided past opponents as though their boots were buried in the turf."

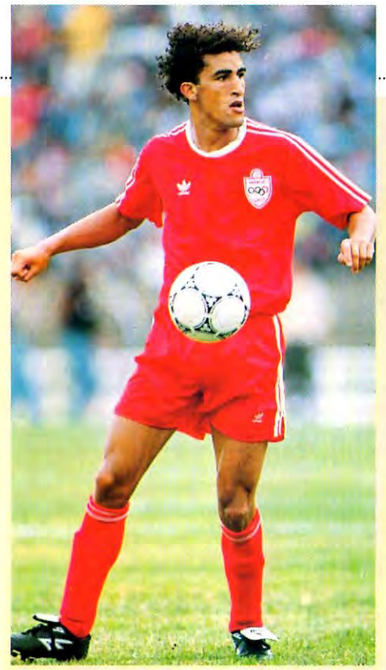
Two years later Hadji forced his way into the Nancy reserves and early in 1992-93 boss Olivier Rouyer called him up for a match at home to Martigues.

"Although we lost 1-0, I put in a reasonable performance and stayed in the side for the rest of the season," says Mustapha. "The one disappointment was that we finished fourth in our Second Division group and just missed out on the play-offs.

"I owe such a lot to Olivier Rouyer. He has shown great faith in me and taught me so much. He was a winger for France about 15 years ago and he encourages everyone at Nancy to play open, attacking football. I don't think I could bear to be in a team whose only aim is to stop the opposition scoring."

When Nancy met the Moroccan national team in a friendly earlier this season, Hadji stayed in his club colours . . . and gave Morocco a glimpse of the talent that they, thankfully, will have on their side in the United States.

MARK GLEESON AND NICK BIDWELL



VICTOR **ONOPKO**

Victor victorious

MOSCOW SPARTAK stopper and skipper Victor Onopko has been dominating Russian soccer since 1992.

He has strengthened his reputation by winning the Player of the Year award once again with 384 points, more than both second and third players together. For Russian soccer it is a unique case because only four defenders have won the poll since 1964.

Vladimir Salkov, Rotor Volgograd manager, has called him "an international-level stopper" together with Benfica's Vasili Kulkov.

"Onopko is a good personal marker, he can help his partners in defence and organise a counter-attack by exact passing. He also is a good athlete and strong in the air," Salkov said.

Although Onopko has agreed to join Germany's Werder Bremen for next season, he has a vital role to play in Russia's World Cup campaign.

Victor Onopko was born in Lugansk, East Ukraine, on October 14, 1969. He says: "When my hometown club, Zaria, won the Soviet Championship in 1972 it gave the impetus for a boy's football to progress in Lugansk. I went to a Zaria football school and began regular training at the age of eight."

Onopko joined Shakhtyor Donetsk and made his first-team debut in August 1988 at home against Moscow Spartak, his present club, and played 30 league matches that season. He joined Kiev Dynamo's reserve squad in the next season for Army service. "Although Kiev Dynamo are the most famous Ukrainian club, I knew that I would come back to Donetsk after one year because I had promised that to manager Anatoli Konkov."

Onopko never got into the Kiev squad and returned to Donetsk, where he played until the Soviet league "died". In December 1991 Moscow Spartak's Oleg Romantsev invited Onopko to Spartak.

"I hesitated because I am a 'home man'. But my parents and my wife advised me to join Moscow because they are Russia's top club," he said.

He soon became a key figure in Spartak's midfield. One month after his Russian League debut, Onopko won his first CIS cap, against England in Moscow.

CIS manager Anatoli Byshovets said: "Onopko was the revelation of the tournament" in the 1992 European Championship in Sweden after arriving as a reserve player. After the CIS team had finished their time together all players had the right to pick a national team to represent in future. It was a serious choice for Onopko. He said: "I received invitations from Ukrainian national team officials, but felt that Russia would reach the World Cup and chose Russia as my national team." He was right.

Onopko helped Spartak win the Soviet Cup (the last final in the tournament's history) beating CSKA Moscow 2-0 in May 1992. Four months later he scored twice in the Moscow derby against Dynamo and opened the door to the championship for his club.

During the season he missed only three of his club's games and was the sole Russian to play in all their 11 internationals. In addition, he helped Spartak to the semi-final of the Ciup-winners Cup, beating both Liverpool and Feyenoord home and away.

Now, however, Onopko has to admit: "The standard of Russian club soccer is falling because of insufficient financial investmentl.

"Many good players went abroad and new footballers aren't coming through because of clubs' financial problems.

"The Russian government must create a project of support for football with the biggest commercial banks assistance."

Onopko has never disguised his desire to sign for a big foreign club. Soon he will have his chance in Germany, but he has a few important engagements before then. The World Cup's global stage awaits.

VLADIMIR KALINKOVICH

PRO-FILE

VICTOR ONOPKO

MOSCOW SPARTAK AND RUSSIA

Born: October 14, 1969, in Lugansk.

Previous clubs: Shakhtyor Donetsk, Kiev Dynamo.

League debut: August 1988, for Shakhtyor v Moscow Spartak.

International debut *(for CIS)*: April 29, 1992 v England.

International caps: for CIS 4 (0 goals), for Russia 15 (1 goal).

HONOURS

Soviet Cup: 1992.

Russian Championship: 1992, 1993.

Russian Player of the Year: 1992, 1993.

HOLLAND

Treble chance

Advocaat has his squad in fighting form

ERIC NICHOLLS

TAKE a little country like Holland, with a total population of about four and a half million above Greater London, and the chances of a World Cup hat-trick seem miles away.

Not a real hat-trick — three finals in a row — but nevertheless their third final.

Facts are facts, and Holland were losing finalists twice in a row — and to the host country — 1974 (West Germany) and 1978 (Argentina).

In 1974 they defeated themselves by getting over-confident too soon, although they were the best team in the tournament. In 1978 they had no luck, hitting a post in the last seconds of normal time and losing in extra-time. America, here we come, is the warning signal from Holland for 1994. That makes sense.

Under Dick Advocaat, the new chief coach, who followed his previous boss Rinus Michels, as the man in charge, the players have learned how to fight. And that is a quality not regarded as typically Dutch.

In the games leading up to US '94, Holland faced the reality that they and England were the favourites in their Group. Norway? Who were they? Enough to beat Holland 2-1 in the opening game.

Holland — this time at home — were then held 2-2 by Poland. Enough to tell England they were the new favourites.

Then the real Advocaat began to emerge. He could have kicked out almost all of the Michels squad when he took over. But no. He used his common sense by sticking basically to the same group, but quietly, and efficiently, introducing "new boys".

Ed De Goey, the Feyenoord goalkeeper brought consistency and confidence to the defence, Jan Wouters, Wim Jonk and Rob Witschge added a new mixture to the midfield and up front players such as Dennis Bergkamp, Marc Overmars and Peter Van Vossen went out to prove — and they did — that old stars such as Wim Kieft were not permanent fixtures in the team.

They smashed Turkey 3-1, San Marino 6-0 and 7-0 and Poland 3-1. Despite the home 0-0 draw with Norway, they drew 2-2 with England at Wembley, and beat England 2-0 at home.

These were the crucial games — for both countries. England were 2-0 ahead and for most people at Wembley it was a question of how many. But it was not be and thanks mainly to the speed and variety of Marc Overmars, England gave away a penalty in the final minutes that led to the draw.

In Rotterdam it was a different story. Holland fought for 90 minutes, which is not their strong point, and England folded up.

This again is due much to the fighting qualifies Advocaat displayed as a tough-tackling midfielder.

But the man has character as well. Ruud Gullit didn't like it one bit when he was substituted at Wembley. Advocaat, however, has won him around, and the ex-Holland captain will be going to America.

As he says: "My heart stays with Holland. I've got a busy time with Sampdoria and I may not be able to play in the friendly games, but if Dick wants me I'll be ready for the World Cup finals."

Advocaat says: "Ruud has been turning it on for Sampdoria, but the important thing is that he is willing to play for Holland.

"He was not happy with his place on the right side of the attack. We have talked about this and Ruud knows I'll play him where he is best for the team."

Whether Marco van Basten is fit for Holland is another question. He has been out of action for a long time and does not know if he will be fit enough for a Holland comeback.

His Belgian specialist, Professor Marc Martens, has looked at his right ankle more than a few times, and a special football boot has been made for him to help the recovery period.

But as he says: "The big question is whether I'm fit enough to play again for Milan in March. If that happens maybe I'll be fit enough for the World Cup."

Advocaat says: "Marco has been out of action for a year. That's a long time in football.

"But we see eye to eye. I made him the captain and I know he wants to return to the side.

"He knows you can't force it. He is moving step for step in the right direction and I am in regular contact with him. The rest is up to his doctors and a bit of luck."

And for the rest? . . .

"Everyone knows that I have a lot of time for Wim Jonk. But there was no question of sacking Jan Wouters to keep Wim in the team. Jan knows how valuable he is to the team in my opinion. He honestly thought it was all over for him a couple of years ago, but he knows better now. I'm happy I've helped to give Jan more self-confidence. The same goes for Ronald Koeman. I've never ever left a player in the cold."

One thing is for sure. He will not leave anyone in the cold in the US.

'Advocaat has used his common sense by sticking basically to the same group, but quietly, and effficiently, introducing new boys'

Double take . . . Ronald Koeman (4) curls home his re-taken free-kick in Rotterdam (above). High flyer . . . Frank Rijkaard gets airborne at the 1992 European Championship (below).

1994 WORLD CUP SCHEDULE
FIRST ROUND

GROUP F
BELGIUM
MOROCCO
HOLLAND
SAUDI ARABIA

19.06.94	Belgium v Morocco	Orlando
20.06.94	Holland v Saudi Arabia	Washington
25.06.94	Belgium v Holland	Orlando
25.06.94	Saudi Arabia v Morocco	New York
29.06.94	Morocco v Holland	Orlando
29.06.94	Belgium v Saudi Arabia	Washington

HOW THEY QUALIFIED EUROPE GROUP 2

09.09.92	Norway v San Marino	10-0
23.09.92	Norway v **Holland**	2-1
23.09.92	Poland v Turkey	1-0
07.10.92	San Marino v Norway	0-2
14.10.92	England v Norway	1-1
14.10.92	**Holland** v Poland	2-2
28.10.92	Turkey v San Marino	4-1
18.11.92	England v Turkey	4-0
16.12.92	Turkey v **Holland**	1-3
17.02.93	England v San Marino	6-0
24.02.93	**Holland** v Turkey	3-1
10.03.93	San Marino v Turkey	0-0
24.03.93	**Holland** v San Marino	6-0
31.03.93	Turkey v England	0-2
28.04.93	England v **Holland**	2-2
28.04.93	Norway v Turkey	3-1
28.04.93	Poland v San Marino	1-0
19.05.93	San Marino v Poland	0-3
29.05.93	Poland v England	1-1
02.06.93	Norway v England	2-0
09.06.93	**Holland** v Norway	0-0
08.09.93	England v Poland	3-0
22.09.93	Norway v Poland	1-0
22.09.93	San Marino v **Holland**	0-7
13.10.93	**Holland** v England	2-0
13.10.93	Poland v Norway	0-3
27.10.93	Turkey v Poland	2-1
10.11.93	Turkey v Norway	2-1
17.11.93	San Marino v England	1-7
17.11.93	Poland v **Holland**	1-3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
NORWAY	10	7	2	1	25	5	16
HOLLAND	10	6	3	1	29	9	15
England	10	5	3	2	26	9	13
Poland	10	3	2	5	10	15	8
Turkey	10	3	1	6	11	19	7
San Marino	10	0	1	9	2	46	1

the COACH

Dick ADVOCAAT. Aged 46 (born September 27, 1947). Played for ADO, FC Den Haag, Roda JC Kerkrade, VVV Venlo, Chicago Sting (US), FC Den Haag, Sparta Rotterdam, Berchem Sport (Belgium), FC Utrecht. Became coach to DSVP, youth coach for Dutch FA between 1984 and 1987 and Haarlem 1987-1989. Then SVV before becoming assistant coach to Rinus Michels with Holland and then took over when Michels retired.

the SQUAD

Ed DE GOEY. Goalkeeper. Aged 27 (born December 20, 1966) with 9 caps. Feyenoord. Became Holland's No. 1 'keeper when Stanley Menzo lost form. Started his career with Sparta, but was picked up by Feyenoord when they were in search of a new 'keeper.

Theo SNELDERS. Goalkeeper. Aged 30 (bon December 7, 963) with 1 cap. Aberdeen (Sco). Began his career with FC Twente and played for Holland schoolboys against England at Wembley. Eventually moved to Aberdeen and was once voted Scotland's player of the year.

Ronald KOEMAN. Defender. Aged 31 (born March 21, 1963) with 69 caps (13 goals). Barcelona (Spa). Has always been a central defender, or sort of sweeper, since he started with Groningen, before moving on to Ajax and then to PSV before his transfer to Barcelona to team up with Johan Cruyff. Free-kick specialist and always attacks.

Danny BLIND. Defender. Aged 32 (born August 1, 1961) with 23 caps (1 goal). Ajax. Another player snapped up from Sparta. Never a big-name player, but always a team player.

Frank DE BOER. Defender. Aged 23 (born May 15, 1970) with 20 caps (1 goal). Ajax. This has been his only club. Like Blind, rarely in the headlines, but a useful all-round defender.

John DE WOLF. Defender. Aged 31 (born December 10, 1962) with 4 caps (2 goals). Feyenoord. Yet another player who began with Sparta and moved on to Groningen before Feyenoord. Lives up to his name as "the wolf" as a hard-tackling central defender. Looks the part, too, with long hair and a beard.

Ulrich VAN GOBBEL. Defender. Aged 23 (born January 16, 1971) with 3 caps. Feyenoord. A regular member of the squad, but regarded mainly as one for the future. Formerly with Willem II.

Berry VAN AERLE. Defender. Aged 31 (born December 8, 1962) with 34 caps. PSV. Yet another player who is a first-class example of what the Dutch call "total football". He is listed as a defender, but he is often a support player in midfield and even striker.

Frank RIJKAARD. Midfielder. Aged 31 (born September 30, 1962) with 65 caps (7 goals). Ajax. Began with Ajax before moving on to Zaragoza and Milan before deciding it was time to "come home". There were no internal problems with Milan, but Frank felt that his key midfield position was better for helping the Ajax youngsters.

Aron WINTER. Midfielder. Aged 27 (born March 1, 1967) with 34 caps (2 goals). Lazio (Ita). Learned his soccer with Ajax. A talented player with the ball, rather than a hard tackler.

Jan WOUTERS. Midfielder. Aged 33 (born July 17, 1960) with 64 caps (4 goals). PSV. Quite the opposite to Winter. A really hard player, who combines this mentality with the brains of a midfield general. Was a fighter with FC Utrecht before a surprise move to Ajax. But . . . a new coach, Louis van Gaal, with new ideas, led Wouters to move across the border to Bayern Munich. Is now one of the old hands fighting to bring pride back to PSV.

Wim JONK. Midfielder. Aged 27 (born October 12, 1966) with 10 caps (3 goals). Internazionale (Ita). Began as a youngster with FC Volendam while working for a firm that painted houses. Ajax spotted him and signed him and now he is with Bergkamp — his soccer twin.

Erwin KOEMAN. Midfielder. Aged 32 (born September 20, 161) with 31 caps (2 goals). PSV. Began with FC Groningen, before moving on to PSV, Mechelen and back to PSV. A bit of a midfield all-rounder, mostly on the left.

Rob WITSCHGE. Midfielder. Aged 27 (born August 22, 1966) with 18 caps (3 goals). Feyenoord. A natural left-sided player. Began with Ajax, moved on to St Etienne before returning, to Feyenoord.

Dennis BERGKAMP. Attack. Aged 24 (born May 18, 1969) with 27 caps (16 goals). Internazionale (Ita). Grew up with the Ajax football school. His parents were Man United fanatics and gave him the name Dennis (although with two ns) after Denis Law. Can win a game with one touch, but rarely misses chances.

Ronald DE BOER. Attack. Aged 23 (born May 15, 1970) with 5 caps (3 goals). Ajax. Twin brother of Frank de Boer. A good attacker who can fit in anywhere.

Marc OVERMARS. Attack. Aged 21 (born March 29, 1973 with 8 caps (1 goal). Ajax. Was a young player with Go Ahead Eagles and Willem II before Ajax saw his potential. Can play equally well on the right or the left side of the attack.

Bryan ROY. Attack. Aged 24 (born February 12, 1970) with 16 caps (2 goals). Foggia (Ita). Began with Ajax, went to Italy and as a left winger and has done well.

Marco VAN BASTEN. Attack. Aged 29 (born October 31, 1964) with 58 caps (24 goals). Milan (Ita). Made his name with Ajax and has done equally well with Milan. Is fighting the clock to be fit in time after a year out of action with an ankle injury.

Ruud GULLIT. Attack. Aged 31 (born September 1, 1962) with 64 caps (16 goals). Sampdoria (Ita). Has been having a great season with Sampdoria. He began with Haarlem and went to Feyenoord, before joining PSV and then Milan, with whom he enjoyed huge success despite injury problems.

ITALY

Milan man . . . the experienced midfielder Roberto Donadoni.

A nation expects

World-class nucleus may be enough

BY PADDY AGNEW

WHEN Arrigo Sacchi took over the Italian team in November 1991, following the national team's failure to qualify for Sweden '92, his appointment was greeted with widespread enthusiasm.

Most people felt that it would be only a matter of time before Sachi, the man who had changed the face of Italian club soccer with his bold, attacking (and winning) ideas when in charge of Milan, would put together one of the strongest Italian national sides of recent times.

Perhaps Sacchi will indeed achieve this lofty aim, this summer at the World Cup finals.

For the time being, however, his Italy have rarely delivered on the collective promise suggested by individual talents.

The big question concerning Sacchi and Italy remains unanswered: was the success of the attacking, chasing and running game used by him with Milan intrinsically dependent on the skills of three talented Dutchmen called Gullit, Van Basten and Rijkaard?

Could Sacchi's ideas ever have functioned so well without three players who had grown up in the open-minded environment of attacking Dutch soccer ?

For the time being, the jury is out on that one.

US '94 will provide the answer, once and for all.

Sacchi believes passionately that there is no reason why his ideas should not work as well with the Italian team as they did with Milan.

It is worth observing, however, that with the departure of the three Dutchmen from Milan and with abio Capello's arrival as coach, the Italian champions have changed their style immeasurably.

Milan, 1994 style, play an Italian-style game based on defensive strength, as underlined by the fact that they conceded only eight goals in their first 24 league games. Without the Dutchmen, AC Milan's so called champagne soccer is a thing of yesteryear.

Without the Dutchmen, Arrigo Sacchi's Italy never have gone close to the quality of soccer played by Milan.

A World Cup qualifying group containing Switzerland, Portugal and Scotland as major rivals should hardly have made Italy struggle.

Yet Italy dropped three points to Switzerland, and they went into their last game of the Group, at home to Portugal, still needing a point to qualify.

Indeed, had Portugal defeated Estonia the week before by 4-0, rather than 3-0, Italy would have had a mighty struggle on their hands against a Portuguese side who then would have required only a draw at the San Siro last November to eliminate Italy.

Given the way that final group game went, too, a draw would not have been beyond the Portuguese.

Obviously, Italy's stuttering World Cup performances owe something to the fact that Sacchi spent a long time trying out various players before finally making up his mind on his best formation.

The statistics of the Sacchi era make the point emphatically.

In two years and 20 games, he has picked 47 players, while he used 34 for Italy's eight World Cup games and summoned no fewer than 68 players to Italian squad sessions.

To be fair to Sacchi, the period of experimentation is now over. Gianluca Pagliuca in goal, Franco Baresi as sweeper and captain, Alessandro Costacurta in central defence, Paolo Maldini at left back, Demetrio Albertini and Dino Baggio in central midfield, Giuseppe Signori on left of midfield and Roberto Baggio in attack represent the central core of the team.

Question marks remain as to who partners Baggio in attack (Pierluigi Casiraghi or Andrea Silenzi), who plays right of midfield (Roberto Donadoni, Stefano Eranio, Alberigo Evani and Giovanni Stroppa are all in the running) and right-back (Antonio Benarrivo is currently ahead of Christian Panucci and Roberto Mussi for the post).

Perhaps the only other outstanding question concerns Parma's in-form midfielder, Gianfranco Zola.

He was called up by Sacchi for his first game in charge of Italy (a 1-1 European Championship qualifying home draw with Norway in November 1991), but has since faded out of the Italian picture.

Sacchi says that he had to chose between Zola and Roberto Baggio and he preferred the latter.

He also prefers to rely on the experienced Roberto Mancini as cover for Roberto Baggio. But Zola's brilliant club form means that the mighty Italian sports media will be touting his name between now and the finals.

Speaking of those finals, Sacchi is the first to acknowledge that of Italy's three first-round opponents — Ireland, Norway and Mexico — Norway worry him most.

Apart from that, Sacchi, in commom with many, argues that there is no obvious super side around and that the usual suspects in the shape of Germany, Holland, Argentina and Brazil can be expected to dominate the tournament.

Sacchi's Italy play a 4-4-2 game, in which the offside trap is used by the defence, in which midfielders chase and harry and in which the two front men make it difficult for the opposition to play the ball out of their own defence.

Milan man . . . defensive maestro Franco Baresi.

The Sacchi work-rate requirement sometimes means that players are called on to override their more creative instincts — Signori in midfield represents perhaps the best example.

Furthermore, this Italy have not yet put together the consistent flow of convincing and winning performances that gave Milan their huge self confidence.

In the absence of such confidence, players revert to their more defence-minded club game.

Even the Milan players revert to a more defensive game since that is the way Milan now play.

In such circumstances, Italy are neither one thing nor the other.

In such circumstances, Italy are frankly very poor.

Sacchi hopes that the combination of his "three world-class" players — Franco Baresi, Roberto Baggio and Paolo Maldini — along with a sustained pre-tournament training camp will finally put the show on the road.

Anything less than a place in the semi-finals will be considered a total failure.

Italy expects.

'Italy have rarely delivered on the collective promise suggested by individual talents'

1994 WORLD CUP SCHEDULE

FIRST ROUND

GROUP E

ITALY
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND
NORWAY
MEXICO

18.06.94	Italy v Rep. of Ireland	New York
19.06.94	Norway v Mexico	Washington
23.06.94	Italy v Norway	New York
24.06.94	Mexico v Rep. of Ireland	Orlando
28.06.94	Rep. of Ireland v Norway	New York
28.06.94	Italy v Mexico	Washington

HOW THEY QUALIFIED
EUROPE
GROUP 1

16.08.92	Estonia v Switzerland	0-6
09.09.92	Switzerland v Scotland	3-1
14.10.92	**Italy** v Switzerland	2-2
14.10.92	Scotland v Portugal	0-0
25.10.92	Malta v Estonia	0-0
18.11.92	Scotland v **Italy**	0-0
18.11.92	Switzerland v Malta	3-0
19.12.92	Malta v **Italy**	1-2
24.01.93	Malta v Portugal	0-1
17.02.93	Scotland v Malta	3-0
24.02.93	Portugal v **Italy**	1-3
24.03.93	**Italy** v Malta	6-1
31.03.93	Switzerland v Portugal	1-1
14.04.93	**Italy** v Estonia	2-0
17.04.93	Malta v Switzerland	0-2
28.04.93	Portugal v Scotland	5-0
01.05.93	Switzerland v **Italy**	1-0
12.05.93	Estonia v Malta	0-1
19.05.93	Estonia v Scotland	0-3
02.06.93	Scotland v Estonia	3-1
19.06.93	Portugal v Malta	4-0
05.09.93	Estonia v Portugal	0-2
08.09.93	Scotland v Switzerland	1-1
22.09.93	Estonia v **Italy**	0-3
13.10.93	Portugal v Switzerland	1-0
13.10.93	**Italy** v Scotland	3-1
10.11.93	Portugal v Estonia	3-0
17.11.93	**Italy** v Portugal	1-0
17.11.93	Malta v Scotland	0-2
17.11.93	Switzerland v Estonia	4-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
ITALY	10	7	2	1	22	7	16
SWITZERLAND	10	6	3	1	23	6	15
Portugal	10	6	2	2	18	5	14
Scotland	10	4	3	3	14	13	11
Malta	10	1	1	8	3	23	3
Estonia	10	0	1	9	1	27	1

the COACH

ARRIGO SACCHI. Aged 47 (1st April, 1946). A modest player, he began his coaching career with Cesena's youths in 1977. Joined Rimini as coach in 1982 and moved to Parma in 1985, taking them up to the Third Division. Took over at Milan in 1987 and led them to two Champions Cups, two World Club Cups, two Italian titles, the Italian Supercup & two Euro Supercups.

the SQUAD

GIANLUCA PAGLIUCA. Goalkeeper. Aged 27 (18th December, 1966), 15 caps. Sampdoria. Now clearly established as first-choice keeper, Pagliuca has had to wait his turn behind first Walter Zenga (for six years) and then Luca Marchegiani, before claiming his place. Cool and competent, his position is under no threat.

LUCA MARCHEGIANI. Goalkeeper. Aged 28 (22nd February, 1966), 4 caps. Lazio. When Sacchi finally found a diplomatic way to rid himself of Zenga, his first choice alternative was Marchegiani. However, a disastrous performance in Italy's opening World Cup qualifier, a 2-2 draw with Switzerland in Cagliari, prematurely ended Marchegiani's tenure.

FRANCO BARESI. Defender. Aged 33 (8th May, 1960), 73 caps (1 goal). Milan. At 34 years of age come the finals, Baresi may be getting on but he remains the central rock around which the Italian (and Milan) defence is built. Hurriedly recalled from international retirement two seasons ago.

ANTONIO BENARRIVO. Defender. Aged 25 (21st August, 1968), 4 caps. Parma. One of the most improved players in Italy, now first-choice right-back.

ALESSANDRO COSTACURTA. Defender. Aged 27 (24th April, 1966), 16 caps (1 goal). Milan. Seemingly guaranteed his first-choice position alongside Baresi in central defence, Costacurta probably owes his Italy run as much to Baresi as to his own talent.

PAOLO MALDINI. Defender. Aged 25 (26th June, 1968), 49 caps (2 goals). Milan. A right-footed player who plays left-back, Maldini is quite simply one of the few unquestionable world-class talents in the Italian squad.

LORENZO MINOTTI. Defender. Aged 27 (8th February, 1967), 1 cap. Parma. Widely considered the logical heir to Baresi, he does not have the pace or viciousness of Baresi but is a fine reader of the game. Will play only in event of injury to Baresi.

ROBERTO MUSSI. Defender. Aged 30 (25th August, 1963), 1 cap. Torino. Will travel to US strictly as reserve and largely because as a one-time Parma player with Sacchi, he is familiar with the coach's methods.

DEMETRIO ALBERTINI. Midfielder. Aged 22 (23rd August, 1971), 12 caps. Milan. Yet another fundamental element in the Sacchi side who hails from Milan. Albertini along with Dino Baggio in central midfield is meant to hold the side together. Sometimes, the task is too much.

DINO BAGGIO. Midfielder. Aged 22 (24th July, 1971), 9 caps (3 goals). Juventus. Tougher than Albertini, Dino Baggio is a modern day Tardelli, capable of making himself more than respected in midfield but also capable of getting forward to score goals.

ROBERTO DONADONI. Midfielder. Aged 30 (9th September, 1963), 47 caps (5 goals). Milan. Donadoni's experience and the name of his club side mean that he will almost certainly get a run out at some stage during the World Cup.

STEFANO ERANIO. Midfielder. Aged 27 (29th December, 1966), 15 caps (3 goals). Milan. Like Donadoni, his familiarity with the Sacchi game means that he remains a leading candidate for the fourth position in midfield.

ALBERIGO EVANI. Midfielder. Aged 31 (Ist January, 1963), 7 caps. Sampdoria. Yet another choice based on the player's familiarity with the Sacchi game. Evani's golden days were at Milan with the Italian coach. Has had an excellent season alongside Ruud Gullit.

GIANLUIGI LENTINI. Midfielder. Aged 25 (27th March, 1969), 12 caps. Milan. If Lentini were to re-discover his best form, it would represent a bonus for the Italian attack. For the time being, however, it remains to be seen if he has fully recovered from the effects of a near fatal car accident last August that has kept him out of the Milan side all season.

GIUSEPPE SIGNORI. Midfielder. Aged 26 (17th February, 1968), 12 caps (4 goals). Lazio. One of the great discussion points of the Sacchi regime has been his insistence that Signori play as a left-sided midfielder rather than in his club role of roving attacker. Whichever his position, Signori remains a fundamental element in the Italian attack.

ROBERTO BAGGIO. Striker. Aged 27 (18th February, 1967), 33 caps (19 goals). Juventus. Baggio, more than any other, will carry the weight of national expectations in the US. In outstanding form for Juventus for much of this season, Baggio has one obvious weakness — he can be easily "marked" (kicked) out of a game.

PIER LUIGI CASIRAGHI. Striker. Aged 25 (4th March, 1969), 14 caps (3 goals). Lazio. Despite the fact that he is kept out of his club side by Alen Boksic, Casiraghi remains a key fixture in the Sacchi shape of things and that alone testifies to the Italian coach's faith in him. A big "target man", he is in confrontation with Silenzi.

ROBERTO MANCINI. Striker. Aged 29 (27th November, 1964), 35 caps (4 goals). Sampdoria. Travels to the US as a reserve, and, despite his experience, will play only if Baggio is injured.

ANDREA SILENZI. Striker. Aged 28 (10th February, 1966), 1 cap. Torino. Could be the last man to catch the plane. At 28, he has had a late renaissance, being among the eading scorers while playing for the hardly irresistible Torino.

MARCO SIMONE. Striker. Aged 25 (7th January, 1969), 1 cap. Milan. Bought by Milan at Sacchi's request, Simone remains a favoured son and that might just be enough to earn him a trip to the US.

MEXICO

Confidence is crucial

Baron's boys may be the best yet

PAUL GARDNER

MEXICO'S big advantage, by tradition, is that they are the most powerful football nation in the CONCACAF region of North and Central America.

That has meant, in the past, almost automatic qualification for the World Cup.

Ten times the Mexicans have played in the final round — only Brazil, Germany and Italy have done better.

Very little success has come from all those final appearances: a total of only six wins in 29 games, two of them coming in the 1970 tournament and three in 1986, both of which Mexico hosted. That regional domination has had its negative side, because the Mexicans have never had to exert themselves in the qualifying rounds.

A changed reality began to appear in the 1980s, because the other CONCACAF nations were improving. In 1982, new FIFA regulations increased the CONCACAF representation in the final round to two teams — making it all the more shocking that Mexico failed to qualify. They finished only third in the final group behind El Salvador and Honduras.

As World Cup hosts in 1986, Mexico reached the quarter-finals, but the challenge to their supremacy in CONCACAF was evidently taking its toll. In 1988, Mexico were found guilty of deliberately using over-age players in the qualifying rounds for the 1989 World Youth Cup. FIFA reacted harshly, banning Mexico from international competition at all levels.

The Mexicans watched the 1990 World Cup from the sidelines — and the following year had to suffer more humiliation. In the newly organised CONCACAF championship, the Gold Cup, the Mexicans were soundly beaten 2-0 by the US.

That was the low point. Coach Manuel Lapuente, unable to bear the shame, resigned on the spot, and the Argentinian Cesar Luis Menotti took over.

Menotti steered Mexico through the first qualification round for the 1994 World Cup but then, in January 1993, he resigned after protracted squabbles with the Mexican FA.

Miguel Mejia Baron took over. He started shakily, losing the first game of the final qualifying round 2-1 in El Salvador. After that, the Mexicans reeled off five straight wins to become the first team to qualify for US '94.

Not just any old wins. This was a team who were playing modern, high-pressure football, but playing it attractively and scoring goals — 17 of them in six games.

The three home fixtures were played in Mexico City's Azteca Stadium before enormous crowds of over 100,000 flag-waving, cheering fans.

The Mexican press carried full-page ads from the FA, thanking the fans, hailing them as "Player No. 12".

Those who had always found Mexican football a slow-paced, rather somnolent affair, were amazed to see Baron's defenders pushing forward, pressuring opponents up near the halfway line. The midfield, led by the tireless Ignacio Ambriz, was a whirl of purposeful running and tackling.

Up front, the ageing but ever-young hero Hugo Sanchez, abetted by newcomers Luis Garcia and Luis Alves, constantly threatened the opposing goal.

And the vibrant Mexican fans enjoyed no player more than the flamboyant goalkeeper Jorge Campos, with his brightly-coloured shirts and his daring dribbling forays upfield.

It all came together perfectly against Canada — the sort of hard-tackling, physical team who had always given the Mexicans trouble.

This time the Canadians were overrun. The score was 4-0, and it could have been twiceas many.

Mexico, it seemed, had at long last produced a national team who reflected the tremendous talent that had always been evident in the country's youth sides. A team who corresponded to the enormous enthusiasm for football in this country of more than 81 million people.

Mexican league football was now the most successful, and the highest-paying, in all of Latin America. League crowds averaged 20,000, and much higher for important games. According to a study by the Argentinian newspaper *Clarin*, the average salary of First Division players in Mexico stood at $150,000 a year compared with $65,000 in Argentina, $48,000 in Brazil and $36,000 in Colombia.

More triumphs followed Mexico's qualification for US '94. They were invited to take part in the 1993 South American Championship, the Copa America, and very nearly pulled off the unthinkable: they reached the final and were narrowly beaten 2-1 by Argentina.

And again, Mexico had done it by playing adventurous football, not by adopting defensive tactics.

Yet another crucial element had been added . . . confidence.

The Mexicans were now winning against top teams, and they were doing it away from the comforting atmosphere of the Azteca Stadium, where the fans and the altitude gave the team an undoubted edge.

A chance of revenge for that 1991 defeat by the US came in the 1993 Gold Cup.

Mexico romped to the final (the results included an 8-0 demolition of Canada), where they meet the US. Coach Baron warned the fans it would not be easy.

> **'Mexico, it seemed, had at long last produced a national team who reflected the tremendous talent that had always been evident in the country's youth sides'**

"There'll be no goleada this time," he said.

But there was, and the Americans were humbled 4-0.

The euphoria — inevitably, and no doubt healthily — was brought to a halt by two poor results in February. Mexico were clobbered 5-1 by Switzerland, then went down 4-1 to Russia.

Both European teams used swift counter-attacks to break through Mexico's defence.

The scorelines carried added significance because Mexico's three opponents in their World Cup group are all European: Italy, the Republic of Ireland, and Norway.

Baron insisted that Mexico would continue playing their pressure game, brushing off suggestions that it could prove suicidal against such opposition.

He excused his players, saying they were tired: "The Mexican player is used to playing only between 40 and 50 games a year," he said.

"Now they are adjusting to having to play up to 80 games."

Despite the setbacks, the hopes of 81 million Mexicans — plus the 15 million Americans of Mexican descent — remain high.

At the end of February, a spirited 2-1 win over Sweden reinforced the opinion held by many that this is the best Mexican team ever. We will soon find out.

Confident . . . David Patino is typical of the new breed of Mexican player.

Colourful . . . goalkeeper Jorge Campos.

WorldCupUSA**94**

1994 WORLD CUP SCHEDULE

FIRST ROUND

GROUP E

ITALY
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND
NORWAY
MEXICO

18.06.94	Italy v Rep. of Ireland	New York
19.06.94	Norway v Mexico	Washington
23.06.94	Italy v Norway	New York
24.06.94	Mexico v Rep. of Ireland	Orlando
28.06.94	Rep. of Ireland v Norway	New York
28.06.94	Italy v Mexico	Washington

HOW THEY QUALIFIED
CONCACAF
Second Round
GROUP A

08.11.92	Costa Rica v Honduras	2-3
08.11.92	St Vincent v **Mexico**	0-4
15.11.92	**Mexico** v Honduras	2-0
15.11.92	St Vincent v Costa Rica	0-1
22.11.92	**Mexico** v Costa Rica	4-0
22.11.92	St Vincent v Honduras	0-4
28.11.92	Honduras v St Vincent	4-0
29.11.92	Costa Rica v **Mexico**	2-0
05.12.92	Honduras v Costa Rica	2-1
06.12.92	**Mexico** v St Vincent	11-0
13.12.92	Costa Rica v St Vincent	5-0
13.12.92	Honduras v **Mexico**	1-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
MEXICO	6	4	1	1	22	3	9
HONDURAS	6	4	1	1	14	6	9
Costa Rica	6	3	0	3	11	9	6
St. Vincent	6	0	0	6	0	29	0

Final Round

04.04.93	El Salvador v **Mexico**	2-1
04.04.93	Honduras v Canada	2-2
11.04.93	**Mexico** v Honduras	3-0
11.04.93	Canada v El Salvador	2-0
18.04.93	Canada v Honduras	3-1
18.04.93	**Mexico** v El Salvador	3-1
25.04.93	**Mexico** v Canada	4-0
25.04.93	Honduras v El Salvador	2-0
02.05.93	Honduras v **Mexico**	1-4
02.05.93	El Salvador v Canada	1-2
09.05.93	Canada v **Mexico**	1-2
09.05.93	El Salvador v Honduras	2-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
MEXICO	6	5	0	1	17	5	10
Canada	6	3	1	2	10	10	7
El Salvador	6	2	0	4	6	11	4
Honduras	6	1	1	4	7	14	3

the *COACH*

Miguel MEJIA BARON. Aged 49 (born September 6, 1944). A former player with UNAM (1964-78), also a qualified dentist. Turned to coaching at UNAM, where he assisted current US coach Bora Milutinovic. Was also Milutinovic's assistant on the Mexican team during the 1986 World Cup.

the *SQUAD*

Jorge CAMPOS. Goalkeeper. Aged 27 (born October 15, 1966) with 30 caps. UNAM. Adventurous sweeper-keeper, formerly a forward and still occasionally plays up front. Was used as a sub forward in the 1993 Gold Cup, and assisted on two goals. His taste for garishly-colored jerseys has landed him in trouble with the Mexican FA. Born in Acapulco.

Adrian CHAVEZ. Goalkeeper. Aged 31 (born June 27, 1962) with five caps. America FC. Reserve keeper recalled to the team for a friendly against Switzerland in January 1994 after Campos was heavily criticised for giving away a penalty in the previous game against Bulgaria. The Swiss put five past Chavez, and Campos was recalled.

Claudio SUAREZ. Defender. Aged 25 (born December 17, 1968) with 15 caps (three goals). UNAM. No-nonsense, hard-tackling rock at the centre of Mexico's defence. Moves up on set pieces and scores useful goals.

Juan RAMIREZ PERALES. Defender. Aged 25 (born March 8, 1969) with 13 caps. Monterrey. Solid central defender, good in the air, quick to read opposing attacks.

Jesus Ramon RAMIREZ. Defender. Aged 24 (born December 5, 1969) with 13 caps (two goals). Necaxa. Highly mobile and skilled player who pushes forward whenever possible. Dribbling and shooting skills make him a real attacking threat. Outstanding left-back at the 1993 Copa America.

Ignacio AMBRIZ. Midfield or defender. Aged 29 (born February 7, 1965) with 23 caps (three goals). Necaxa. Muscular, crew-cut midfield dynamo, captain of the team in the absence of Hugo Sanchez. Possessor of ferocious long-range shot.

Raul GUTIERREZ. Defender. Aged 25 (born October 16, 1968) with 16 caps. Atlante. Brings a conservative, tactically-sound approach to the right full-back position; very quick.

Miguel HERRERA. Defender. Aged 26 (born March 18, 1968) with 10 caps. Atlante. Fair-haired outside back. His World Cup campaign was interrupted by suspension after he was sent off for hitting an opponent in a qualifier against Honduras.

Marcelino BERNAL. Midfielder. Aged 31 (born May 27, 1962) with 19 caps (three goals). Toluca. Scored a hat-trick in Mexico's 11-0 win v St Vincent in December, 1992.

Jose Manuel DE LA TORRE. Midfielder. Aged 28 (born November 13, 1965) with 17 caps (two goals). Guadalajara. Scored two goals in Mexico's first three World Cup qualifying ties but missed the last eight through loss of form.

Miguel ESPANA. Midfielder. Aged 33 (born April 4, 1961) with 39 caps (one goal). UNAM. Veteran of the 1986 World Cup, when he played in all six of Mexico's games.

David PATINO. Midfielder. Aged 26 (born September 6, 1967) with 19 caps. Monterrey. Ideal all-action player for the team's high-pressure style of play in midfield; always eager to go forward with the ball. Can also play in attack.

Benjamin GALINDO. Midfielder. Aged 33 (born December 11, 1960) with 20 caps. Guadalajara. The veteran of the Mexican midfield, where he adds thoughtful, accurate passing. Lost two teeth in an incident during the World Cup tie v El Salvador last April.

Alberto GARCIA ASPE. Midfielder. Aged 27 (born May 11, 1967) with 19 caps (three goals). Necaxa. Plays alongside Ambriz in central midfield as the team's chief playmaker. Excellent left footer whose natural ability helped earn him the accolade of a place in the All-Star Team selected by the media after the last Copa America.

Luis GARCIA. Attack. Aged 24 (born June 1, 1969) with 17 caps (four goals). Atletico Madrid (Spa). Seen as the successor to Hugo Sanchez. Quick-thinking, quick-moving forward with a nose for goal. Moved to Atletico Madrid in 1989 and was Mexico's second-top scorer with four in the World Cup qualifiers and won a Prima award from the MFA for his outstanding contribution.

Carlos HERMOSILLO. Attack. Aged 29 (born August 24, 1964) with 16 caps (four goals). Guadalajara. Member of the 1986 World Cup squad. Fast, strong forward, powerful header. Scored four in the 11-0 rout of St Vincent. Joint second-top scorer in Mexico's World Cup bid.

Hugo SANCHEZ. Attack. Aged 35 (born July 11, 1958) with 62 caps (21 goals). Rayo Vallecano (Spa). All-time greatest Mexican player. Was called up for the Mexican Olympic team in 1974, when only 16. Moved to Spain in 1981 with Atletico Madrid, joined Real Madrid in 1985, where he stayed for seven seasons, winning the Spanish goal-scoring title five times. Returned to Mexico to play for Club America in 1992, but is now back in Spain with Rayo Vallecano. Known for his exuberant somersault after goals scored. He is also a qualified dentist.

Luis FLORES. Attack. Aged 32 (born July 18, 1961) with 14 caps (three goals). Atlas. Veteran who played for Mexico in the 1986 World Cup. Then he was used as a forward, now also plays in midfield.

ZAGUE (Luis Roberto Alves). Attack. Aged 26 (born May 26, 1967) with 41 caps (22 goals). America. Also nicknamed Zaguinho. Tall, left-footed forward. His elusive, light-footed dribbling is allied to powerful shooting. Scored the remarkable total of 11 goals in the 1993 Gold Cup. Father is Brazilian who was also known as Zague and played for many years in Mexico.

American Airlines DALLAS CUP XIV

THE AMERICAN AIRLINES DALLAS CUP XV (March 27-April 3, 1994)

The select contest goes to new heights

Texans, known for their devotion to the biggest and the grandest, make an exception for the Dallas Cup.

Bill Stroube sounds almost boastful when he tells you, in suitably twanging Texas tones, that the Dallas Cup is not the biggest youth football tournament in the world.

Stroube, the tournament director, says: "The basis of the Dallas Cup has always been quality over quantity. It's not for every one — it's select."

Indeed, nearly 500 teams from the US applied to enter this year's event — but only 89 were chosen.

Add in 55 overseas teams, and you have the total field of 144, divided up into Girls under-19, Boys under-12, under-14, under-16, under-19, and the under-19 Super Group.

The idea of the world's top youth players pouring into Dallas no longer seems so strange — this is, after all, the 15th edition of the tournament.

But the development of the Dallas Cup is an astonishing story.

Twenty years ago there were very few people in Texas who cared about soccer, or even knew what a soccer ball looked like. This was gridiron-football territory with a vengeance, especially at the high-school level where it was, and still is, something of a religion.

But the soccer pioneers were already quietly at work.

Among them Ron Griffith, a Brit from Blackpool who had formed the Texas Longhorns youth club in Dallas.

After several years of taking his teams to Europe, Griffith decided it was time to pay back some of the hospitality by inviting the foreign kids to Dallas. Thus the Dallas Cup was born in 1980, with a field of 26 teams, most of them from the local area.

From the start, the idea was that the event should be about more than soccer.

Wherever possible, foreign teams were "adopted" by a local side, and stayed in the homes of the Dallas players. This year, 34 of the overseas teams will be given home stays.

That arrangement emphasises what has always been the major strength of the Dallas Cup. The warm family feeling of the event — the result of the enormous amount of work done by enthusiastic volunteers.

Stroube works with over 500 unpaid helpers, who do everything from putting up goalnets to running the press box.

Despite the home stays, the local hotels do pretty well out of the week-long Dallas Cup.

"The tournament accounts for about 20,000 hotel room nights," says Stroube. "It's a major convention by any standards."

The commercial attractiveness of the event was proved in 1991, when American Airlines became the title sponsor.

Past masters . . . Thailand's Thamrong Thai Samosorn (above) and West Ham (left), 1992 Super Group winners.

Fields have been the only snag. Quality pitches are hard to come by, and the Dallas soil does not drain well — which creates problems when the rains come.

This year 20 fields will be used, 10 of them at the same complex in Richardson, just north of Dallas.

And there have been the comic incidents. Nigerian teams have proved a puzzlement. One year they paid all their fees and deposits, and never turned up.

Another year they did turn up, but checked in at the wrong hotel, and for three days nobody knew they had arrived.

German efficiency took a knock in 1989 when a Berlin team arrived ready to play, but had to be denied a place because their secretary had forgotten to send in the application form.

And a 1992 Bulgarian entry in the under-19 girls group claimed a "misunderstanding" about the age regulations when one of their players was found to be over 30.

Referees have always received special attention at the event, and top FIFA officials can be seen working the games — in 1991 they included the Mexican Edgar Codesal, the year after he had been in charge of the World Cup final.

This year, out of a total of 250 referees, 20 are FIFA referees — an extraordinary presence for a youth tournament. What helps to draw the FIFA men is Stroube's determination that the Dallas Cup should "set new standards, should be the finest youth event in the world".

Nowhere is that determination more evident than in the growth of the Boys under-19 Super Group, which was introduced in 1990 and features youth teams from the world's top pro clubs, plus selected American teams.

The 1994 field includes Real Madrid (the 1993 winners), Milan, Celtic, Tottenham Hotspur, Kaiserslautern, River Plate, Sao Paulo, CD Guadalajara, Club Brugge, and Tahuichi of Bolivia (winners in 1990).

The strength of that field has led Stroube, with solid justification, to rename the group the Under-19 World Club Championship.

This year for the first time — attracted, no doubt by the big-name clubs, but also by the excitement generated by the World Cup — national television has arrived.

The Super Group final will be broadcast live by *ESPN* in the US and 45 other countries.

The Super Group also presents a challenge to the atmosphere of the Dallas Cup.

Can it continue to be a youth event in which soccer is only one part — the most important part, certainly — of a whole social atmosphere? Or will the seriousness of the professional clubs upset the balance?

Stroube is aware of the problem: "I believe in the concept of the Super Group because I want the young American players to see the world's best youth teams in action.

"Our players need to see soccer of this calibre. But the Dallas Cup has always had a special feeling to it, we have always put the kids first.

"It's my job to develop the tournament without sacrificing that integrity.

"I'm sure I can do it because . . . well, I don't want to sound corny, but I do believe that Texas hospitality is the greatest in the world."

DIEGO STILL SET ON THE WORLD CUP

DIEGO MARADONA still insists he will be ready to lead Argentina at the World Cup finals even though he no longer has a club.

Maradona (right) and Newell's Old Boys of Rosario parted company by mutual consent after five months in which he played only seven games.

The club defined Maradona's "fitness problems" as both physical and psychological.

Injury-prone Maradona even managed to get himself hurt before his club's exhibition game against Brazil's Vasco da Gama in Mar de Plata, a popular Argentinian seaside resort.

The game was one of a series arranged to collect money to help pay his salary and Maradona slipped and aggravated a leg injury when going up the stairs to the pitch. He hobbled through the first half, then went off in the second and disappeared as far as the club were concerned.

He failed to turn up for the return game against Vasco five days later, which consequently was played in front of hardly any spectators and no TV cameras. His manager, Marcos Franchi, said Maradona was depressed by his injury problems, but apparently not too depressed to ask for half a million dollars to play in a match in the United Arab Emirates.

Then he was reported as being seen in a nightclub at 3 am. The Arab organisers did not accept his offer.

Two big Buenos Aires clubs — Boca Juniors (for whom he played formerly) and San Lorenzo (who wanted him when Newell's signed him) — are reported to be interested in him.

The following day he turned both a water-hose and then an airgun on reporters besieging his country villa at Mercedes, north of Buenos Aires. His passport was duly seized by a court after victims struck by pellets complained to police.

ERIC WEIL

COLOMBIA

THIS is the close season in Colombia, but there has been some inevitable fall-out from 1993.

America Cali's coach, Francisco "Pacho" Maturana, quit after the side not only failed to retain the Colombian championship but failed to qualify for the 1994 Copa Libertadores.

The primary reason given for his departure was that he wanted to concentrate on preparations for the Colombian national side, for the forthcoming World Cup. Maturana had been in charge at America for 18 months, combining the job with the national position.

His replacement is Hugo Gallego, who had worked with Maturana at Once Phillips and Nacional of Medellin and recently was coaching Itagui, eventually relegated from Division B.

Another coach on the move is Daniel Silquero, who parted company with Union Magdalena. As his replacement, the club have turned to Jorge Luis Pinto, the former Santa Fe coach, who will be in his second spell with Union.

Tulua, Colombia's newest professional club, gained promotion from Division B. The club's fortunes were transformed mid-season by the appointment of Humberto "Tucho" Ortiz, who had coached the Colombian national side in 1992.

KEITH SMITH

Tragedy mars title finale

ECUADOR

EMELEC won the championship of Ecuador after a close finish involving three clubs.

A 1-0 win over Green Cross on the final day gave them their seventh title with 19 points, one more than El Nacional and Barcelona.

Emeclec deserved their success, for they played attractive soccer under the management of an Argentinian, Salvador Capitano. But tragedy marred the final stages of the competition.

El Nacional had had to stage a two-leg play-off to decide second place and qualification, with the champions, for the Libertadores Cup.

Nacional won the home match 1-0, but lost 3-1 in the return, with Carlos Munoz scoring a hat-trick. Three days later, however, international striker Munoz was killed in a road accident — a sad blow to both club and country.

The season's top scorer, 19-goal Diego Herrerra of LDU Quito, has joined Barcelona as they try to replace Munoz.

The 1994 season is about to begin, with all First Division clubs being allowed to use four imported players. This of course will be of benefit to the wealthier clubs, such as Emelec and Barcelona.

ECUADOR — *Final table*

	P	W	D	L	Pts
Emelec	14	9	1	4	19
El Nacional	14	8	2	4	18
Barcelona	14	8	2	4	18
Green Cross	14	5	3	6	13
Delfin	14	6	1	7	13
Dep. Cuenca	14	5	3	6	13
LDU (Quito)	14	4	3	7	13
Deportivo Quito	14	2	3	9	7

Dusan Drascovic, coach of the national team, has quit after five years and joined Braganinto of Brazil. So far no replacement has been named.

Drascovic (above) had helped to create a team much more difficult to beat than in former times, although he could not manage qualification for either the 1990 or 1994 World Cups.

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W.S/AMERI/4.94

Bennett does the business

ARGENTINA

HONDURAS international Eduardo Bennett is the first player from that country in the Argentinian League. He arrived last August for a trial with San Lorenzo and as the national championship went into recess he was joint top scorer.

His agent, Uruguayan Hernan Sosa, is a former San Lorenzo player, who recommended Bennett to his old club, and coach Hector Veira asked him to go for a trial.

When Bennett arrived at the airport there was nobody there to meet him. He took a taxi into town — a larger town than he had ever seen in his life — and a cheating driver took almost all his money off him. Bennett asked around and finally ran into a San Lorenzo fan who told him how to get there, not knowing that he was talking to the team's future leading scorer.

When Bennett eventually arrived, Veira was immediately impressed by his manner and was soon impressed by his play, too.

Within a month Bennett was in San Lorenzo's first team, and scoring goals.

The media were impressed by the player's willingness to accept all interviews and questions kindly and without impatience, but Bennett was overawed by the number of reporters wanting to interview him.

"There aren't that many in the whole of Honduras," he said.

Bennett was born in Selva Atlantida 25 years ago, the youngest of four brothers. He went to high school up to second year, learning accountancy, but he was more in love with a football. That is why he suffered a lot when his mother sent him to boarding school: he could not play for his country's junior selection.

He made it in the end, with leading clubs Nacional and Olimpia, the country's under-21 and under-23 selections, and the national team, who reached the final round of the CONCACAF World Cup qualifying zone.

Now San Lorenzo fans call him "Pele's brother" — although Bennett feels that the only thing he has in common with Pele is the colour of his skin.

Bennett is a very disciplined player. He plays cleanly, does not argue with referees, loves salsa music, but does not go out dancing, and names video games as his hobby.

"I try to keep away from arguments and incidents, but when rivals 'look for me' they'll not find me turning the other cheek," he says.

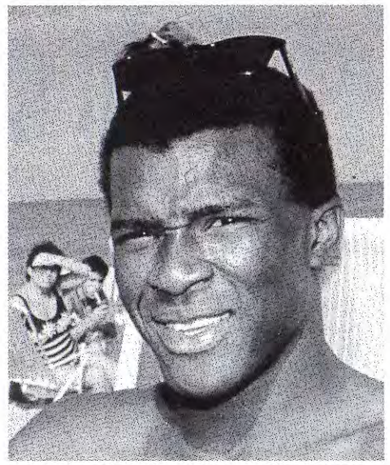
"I get rid of my tension by pressing the ball in my hand punching it instead of playing rough as many do.

"Argentinian soccer is very positive, and every day I learn something new. But I can't say I've quite adapted yet and I still have a lot to learn . . . like playing more calmly and not hurrying when in front of goal.

"Fans often measure you by the number of goals you score, but you should judge a player by what else he does. It's much more important for the team to gain points than to have the League's top scorer."

San Lorenzo were a point behind four joint leaders with four games to go in the national opening championship.

Ask any San Lorenzo fan and he'll tell you that the man from Honduras, who turned up at their training camp with his little bag, is certainly doing his bit.



Among the goals . . . Eduardo Bennett of San Lorenzo.

Union's return after 16 years

CHILE

UNION ESPANOLA won the play-off between leading teams to accompany champions Colo Colo into this season's Libertadores Cup, for the first time in 16 years.

Uruguayan-born coach Nelson Acosta led them to the pre-season Chile Cup and then to become the early sensation of the First Division, winning their first six games.

They finished only fifth but in their vital last play-off game they beat Temuco 1-0.

The latter, promoted for this season, almost qualified for the Libertadores Cup for the first time. They are coached by Guillermo Paez, a member of the Colo Colo team who reached the Libertadores Cup Final in 1973 and are often considered to be Chile's best-ever club side.

Temuco ended the season with six wins and two draws in their last eight games, during which they conceded only two goals.

Cobreloa, defending champions and second this season, were expected to win the play-off, but finished pointless.

Their mistake was to transfer leading scorer Marco Figueroa to Mexico's Morelia a couple of weeks before the end of the championship.

One of their remaining games was against champions Colo Cola — a 0-0 draw — and a win could have made all the difference. Figueroa still finished as championship top scorer with 18 goals.

Universidad Catolica, third in the First Division, did not make it to the last four play-offs and dismissed their coach, Ignacio Prieto.

Big mistake . . . Cobreloa missed Marco Figueroa (above) after selling him to Mexico's Morelia.

Big chiefs . . . Colo Colo are back in the Libertadores Cup after winning the Chile Championship (right).

ERIC WEIL

The right name

BOLIVIA

THE STRONGEST, from La Paz, clinched a Libertadores Cup place with one game to go in the third stage of the professional championship.

The Strongest had 13 points from nine games, while Blooming (12) and champions Bolivar (11) were the only teams in contention for the second place.

URUGUAY

ONCE AGAIN the season's champions, Penarol, will not be in the Libertadores Cup, due to Uruguay's unusual qualifying system.

The top six teams play an extra tournament, the Liguilla, to decide the two qualifiers, and Nacional, fourth during the season, improved dramatically under a new Argentinian coach, Eduardo Manera. They won the tournament unbeaten, including a 3-1 victory against Penarol.

In the final game, Defensor Sporting and Penarol played for second place and the former won 2-0. According to rules, the First Division champions play the runners-up if they do not qualify, but Sporting Defensor won again (2-1) to gain a Cup berth for the second time in three years.

Pele makes a fortune

PELE seems sure to be the biggest winner in this year's World Cup.

He played in three World Cup winning teams for Brazil, but will make millions more out of this one than he did from his three as a player.

His firm has the exclusive rights for the sale of World Cup tourist packages in Brazil and he is promoting a new electronic game being produced by an American firm.

Pele (right) also is the star of a 52-instalment cartoon called Pelezito, which tells his life story and will bring him more millions of dollars. And a sports goods industry, of which he is a partner, is expected to make a profit of $40 million this year!

● ***NOTE:*** Allegations of corruption regarding referees in Brazil were levelled at certain parties within the Rio State Federation and not the CBF as stated last month.

CHILE
First Division *(final)*

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Colo Colo	30	17	10	3	50	21	44
Cobreloa	30	14	12	4	51	38	40
Univ. Catolica	30	15	7	8	55	35	37
Univ. de Chile	30	13	9	8	45	25	35
Union Espanola	30	13	9	8	49	30	35
Dep. Temuco	30	9	14	7	44	29	32
O'Higgins	30	12	8	10	37	32	32
Antofagasta	30	9	13	8	35	39	31
Dep. La Serena	30	8	11	11	23	31	27
Everton	30	8	11	11	29	41	27
Dep. Osorno	30	9	8	13	23	33	26
Palestino	30	10	6	14	28	42	26
Coquimbo Unido	30	67	11	12	30	41	25
Melipilla	30	6	13	11	34	47	25
Dep. Concepcion	30	3	13	14	23	46	19
Dep. Iquique	30	7	5	18	31	57	19

Bottom two relegated automatically, two teams above them play in relegation-promotion play-off with 3rd and 4th of Second Division. Second to seventh teams play for vice-championship, won by Union Espanola.

CHILE
Second Libertadores Cup play-off

(Liguilla): 1) Union Espanol 5 pts;2) Universidad de Chile 4; 3) Temuco 3; 4) Cobreloa 0. *Union qualify.*

VENEZUELA
First Division

	P	W	D	L	Pts
Minerven	16	8	4	4	20
Caracas FC	14	7	5	2	19
Italia	14	8	2	4	18
Tachira	14	7	3	4	17
Trujillanos	14	6	5	3	17
Mineros Guyana	14	7	3	4	17
El Vigia	14	6	4	4	16
Monagas	14	6	3	5	15
Llaneros	15	5	4	6	14
Maritimo	14	6	1	7	13
Zamora	14	3	7	4	13
ULA Merida	14	5	2	7	12
Estudiantes	15	5	2	8	12
Maracaibo	14	4	4	6	12
Valencia	14	5	1	8	11
Anzoategui	14	0	2	12	2

URUGUAY
Libertadores Cup qualifying Liguilla *(final)*

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nacional	5	3	2	0	7	3	8
Defensor Sporting	5	3	1	1	7	3	7
Penarol	5	3	0	2	13	7	6
Danubio	5	1	3	1	8	10	5
Progreso	5	0	3	2	4	11	3
Cerro	5	0	1	4	7	12	1

Nacional qualify for Cup. First Division champions (Penarol) had the right to play the runners-up for second place if they finished outside top two. Defensor won 2-1.

EI SALVADOR
First Division

1) Luis A. Firpo 35pts; 2) Alianza (played one less) 30; 3) Baygon-ADET, FAS 29; 5) Tiburones 26; 6) Municipal Limeno 24 (played one less), Marte 24; 8) Aguila 23; 9) Cojutepeque 22; 10) Apaneca 16.

MEXICO
First Division

Group 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Santos	27	11	9	7	37	40	31
Necaxa	27	9	11	7	37	35	29
Puebla	27	8	12	7	30	31	28
Univ.Guadalajara	27	8	9	10	32	37	27
Univ. Nuevo Leon	27	5	14	8	26	36	24
Group 2							
Atlante	26	12	3	11	48	42	27
Univ. Aut. Mexico	27	9	7	11	40	34	25
Morelia	27	8	8	11	41	46	24
Leon	26	7	8	11	26	34	22
Queretaro	27	4	11	12	24	43	19
Group 3							
Toluca	27	12	8	7	35	24	32
America	27	13	4	10	45	34	30
Cruz Azul	27	11	9	7	38	25	31
Veracruz	27	6	10	11	34	48	22
Univ. Tamaulipas	27	5	11	12	28	35	21
Group 4							
UNAM	27	10	14	3	34	22	34
Guadalajara	27	12	7	8	35	26	31
Atlas	27	12	6	9	37	31	30
UT Neza	27	9	9	9	33	38	27
Monterrey	27	8	10	9	38	41	26

Top two from each group qualify for quarter-finals after 38 games.

GUATEMALA
First Division

	P	W	D	L	Pts
Municipal	20	14	6	0	34
Sasachispas	20	8	11	1	27
Comunicaciones	20	9	7	4	25
Suchitepequez	18	7	8	3	22
Aurora	19	6	8	5	20
Escuintla	20	7	6	7	20
Mictlan	20	5	9	6	19
Izabal	20	5	8	7	18
Chiquimulilla	20	5	8	7	18
Amatitlan	20	5	5	10	15
Xelaju	20	2	8	10	12
Juventude Retalteca	20	2	3	15	7

COSTA RICA
First Division

1) Alajuelense 38pts; 2) Cartagines 31; 3) San Carlos (played one less) 29;4) Herediano (one less) 28; 5) Puntarenas 27; 6) Ramonense 26; 7) Saprissa, Perez Zeledon (both played 1 less) 25; 9) Limon 22; 10) Turrialba 18; 11) El Carmen 17; 12) Belen 16.

HONDURAS
First Division

1) Real Espana 23pts; 2) Olimpia 20; 3) Victoria, Vida 18; 5) Marathon 17; 6) Platense 15; 7) Progreseno, Real Maya 14; 9) Petrotela 13; 10) Motagua 12.

BOLIVIA
Professional League — third stage

Leaders after nine games (one to go): 1) The Strongest 13pts; 2) Blooming 12; 3) Bolivar 11; 4) Oriente Petrolero 7. *(The Strongest clinched one Libertadores Cup place.)*

BOOK REVIEWS

THERE are four main categories of football books: statistical, historical, instructional and kick-and-tell. By far the majority of recent publications fall into the statistical variety.

Leading the way — and holding the heavyweight title, certainly — is ***Nations of Europe***, by Ron Hockings and Keir Radnedge. Production problems delayed publication but the wait should prove worthwhile for a unique two-volume set which features every line-up and goalscorer of every European nation's international matches *(published by Articulate, 12a North Street, Emsworth, Hants PO10 7DQ).*

The general world scene is covered in excellent form as usual by the ***Annuario del Calcio Mondiale***, edited by Salvatore Lo Presti *(SET Via Colli 24, 10129 Turin)*. Though this is an Italian-published book it is a fine-print, 992-page mini-encyclopedia set out in easily-understandable sequences, and the language should prove no problem for fans anywhere.

Narrowing down to the European club scene means the ***European Football Yearbook*** (edited by Mike Hammond for *Sports Projects, 188 Lightwoods Hill, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands B67 5EH; price £21.95*). The latest issue, covering every player's match details and lots of other information besides, has risen to 1100 pages and features the usual colour centre-spreads of badges and kit colours. Excellent value as ever.

Mixing the statistical and historical are the World Cup books which have started to arrive on the bookshop shelves. First out of the pack was ***The Simplest Game***, by *WORLD SOCCER* columnist Paul Gardner (*Macmillan Publishing, 866 Third Avenue, New York NY 1022*). This is a major revision of Gardner's excellent book of the same title originally published in 1976 and remains the best introduction to soccer, the World Cup and many other allied subjects for any serious fan of the game — though it was specifically aimed at the inquiring American sports mind.

A more specific guide to the World Cup in the US itself is ***The Greatest Show on Earth*** by Stewart Beckett *(CAS, Courtlets House, 38 King Street West, Manchester M3 2WZ; price £10.95)*. This takes the reader directly through the World Cup history, the qualifying competition and results, information about venues (including brief listings of hotels, restaurants, etc). Handy guide for any prospective World Cup travellers.

Readers may remember praise in this column for the Polish series of statistical works edited by Andrzej Gowarzewski from Katowice. In 1990 Gowarzewski produced a World Cup statistical book listing all matches and statistical details of all players and coaches. Now he has updated the "people" section to include all those involved at Italia '90 and published it in its own volume, the ***Fuji Herosi Mundiali*** *(published by Lubelskie Zaklady Graficzne, Wydawnictwo, GiA, 40-367 Katowice 14, Poland)*. The book includes a translated guide to the formula in English to help non-Polish readers.

Fans of Russian football should welcome ***Our Legionnaires***, a Russian-language guide to all the players who have left the Soviet soccer empire since the end of the cold war. The research took Vladimir Kalinkovich three years.

Finally, ***The Story of Juventus***, compiled by Alain Verjans in Belgium, is a "home-grown" statistical history of the great Italian club *(£15 from the author, c/o Chemins de Sluse 76, 4690 Glons-Bassenge, Belgium)*.

THUR 6 JAN

BRAZIL: FIFA president Joao Havelange offers to act as go-between in attempts to resolve the row between the Rio federation and the three would-be breakaway clubs, Botafogo, Fluminense and Flamengo.

GERMANY: Karlsruhe goalkeeper Oliver Kahn agrees to join Bayern Munich at the seasaon's end in a German record £1.8million deal for a goalkeeper.

ITALY: Milan move three points clear of Juventus by drawing 0-0 away to Udinese in a match rearranged from December 12 . . . Roma officials say Claudio Caniggia, their Argentinian forward serving a dope-test suspension, will return to action in a tournament in Mar del Plata, Buenos Aires and Mendoza between May 10-12 and involving Napoli, River Plate and Independiente . . . Roberto Baggio says he would like to end his career in Japan.

TURKEY: Galatasaray striker Hakan Sukur dislocates an arm and elbow in a training match and is ruled out for six weeks.

FRI 7 JAN

BRAZIL: Former top referee Reginaldo Mathias says match-fixing in the Rio championship had been commonplace since 1985. A police spokesman says its own inquiry will centre on fixed matches which had featured in the government-run lottery.

GERMANY: More than 3,000 Bayern Munich fans turn out to see Franz Beckenbauer lead his first training sessions since his virtual self-appointment as coach. Absent are Thomas Helmer. Christian Ziege and Lothar Matthaus who had been given extra holiday because of the national team's trip to the US and Mexico in December. Matthaus uses the afternoon off to marry girlfriend Lolita Morena in Switzerland.

SAT 8 JAN

ACTION: Romario scores a hat-trick as Barcelona thrash Real Madrid 5-0. More bad news for Madrid as Alfonso is carried off with torn ligaments in his right knee and is ruled out of Spain's squad for the World Cup finals.

SUN 9 JAN

ACTION: Greek champions AEK Athens beat Apollon 3-1 to maintain their six-point lead . . . Milan

are surorisingly held 0-0 in Italy by bottom club Lecce; ***Roberto Mancini (above)*** scores twice, to complete a century of Italian league goals, as Sampdoria beat Napoli 4-1 despite a David Platt penalty miss . . . Kawasaki Verdy Yomiuri beat Kashima Antlers 2-0 in the first leg of the J.League title play-off in Tokyo with goals from Miura and Bismarck.

BRAZIL: Pele repeats his concern over the allegations of corruption in Rio. He says: "The guilty must be tried and convicted. The reputation of Brazilian soccer is at stake."

MON 10 JAN

CAMEROON: Former France boss ***Henri Michel (right)*** arrives in Yaounde for talks with the FA about taking over as coach.

BRAZIL: Flamengo bid to prise veteran World Club Cup-winning midfielder Toninho Cerezo away from Sao Paulo.

BULGARIA: Dimitar Penev calls up 12 foreign-based players in his squad for his opening pre-World Cup campaign, against Mexico in San Diego. The squad includes Stoichkov, Kostadinov, Lyuboslav Penev, Balakov and Guentchev.

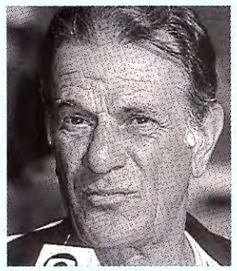
GHANA: Ghana and Ivory Coast agree two friendlies in an effort to persuade the CAF to drop a ban on their clubs' participation in continental competitions after civil disorder broke out last November following a match between Asante Kotoko and Ivorian club ASEC Abidjan.

ITALY: Arrigo Sacchi plays down Italy's World Cup prospects and singles out Germany, Brazil, Holland and Argentina as co-favourites. Sacchi adds: "We have ground to make up on all four, especially if Maradona can get back to his best shape. Colombia and Norway could surprise teams."

SAUDI ARABIA: Sepp Piontek, ex-Denmark boss, is appointed adviser to top club, Ittihad, for a three-week trial.

SPAIN: Benito Floro, defending himself in the wake of Real Madrid's five-goal thrashing in Barcelona, says: In Madrid, the coach has always been the man to blame. But in four years this club has had six different coaches and choppiong and changing hasn't done much good.

TUE 11 JAN



BRAZIL: Sao Paulo coach ***Tele Santana (right)*** adds more fuel to the match-fix fire when he claims that the 1990 Sao Paulo championship had been rigged when the referees were picked with the deliberate intention of bringing the title to Corinthians. Unfortunately there was no inquiry and proof was never found. At the time Santana coached Corinthians' arch-rivals Palmeiras.

CAMEROON: Cameroon appoint Henri Michel, former coach of the France, to boss their World Cup campaign. Michel is officially appointed technical director with Jules Nyongha remaining as coach, in an assistant's role.

ENGLAND: US forward Roy Wegerle is ruled out for six weeks with a knee injury . . . Southampton manager Ian Branfoot quits.

FRANCE: Ghana forward Abedi Ayew Pele is voted African Footballer of the Year for a third successive time in the annual poll run by *France Football* magazine. Pele, now playing for Lyon, gains two votes more than Eintracht Frankfurt's Anthony Yeboah. Rashidi Yekini of Nigeria is placed third . . . state prosecutor Eric de Montgolfier threatens to halt his pursuit of the Marseille match-fixing scandal after the Justice Minister refuses to consider lifting the parliament immunity of Marseille president Bernard Tapie.

PORTUGAL: Sporting beat an International XI 2-1 in Lisbon in a match which raises £120,000 for Sergei Cherbakov, who is not expected to play again after breaking his back in a car accident.

SWITZERLAND: UEFA says Torino, Cup-winners Cup quarter-finalists, could be expelled from the competition if the Italian fraud squad provides it with proof of allegations of match-fixing attempts and financial irregularities now current in Italy . . . UEFA says it may admit Yugoslavia into the draw for the 1996 European Championship if UN sanctions are lifted before preliminary matches begin . . . FIFA prepares to order that insurance premiums for players attending national team matches must be paid by their clubs and not the federations.

WED 12 JAN

ACTION: A 43rd-minute header by Jean-Pierre Papin lifts Milan to a 1-0 victory away to Parma in the first leg of the Euro Supercup.

AUSTRALIA: Robbie Slater, of French club Lens, is voted Oceania Footballer of the Year for the second time. Slater receives 72 votes, ahead of Wynton Rufer (53) and Ned Zelic (46). Slater's win prevents Rufer from winning the award three times.

GERMANY: A woman stabs Hamburg amateur Oliver Moller as he watches an indoor tournament in Stuttgart. Moller is taken to hospital but not seriously hurt.

NORWAY: Lillestrom borrow World Cup striker Jan-Aage Fjortoft back from Swindon for the rest of the season.

PORTUGAL: Manuel Damasio, new president of Benfica, provides his promised £1.6million to pay off the club's pressing debts.

SOUTH AFRICA: Augusto Palacios quits as South Africa's manager to take up a job as boss of Turkish club Genclerbirligi.

THU 13 JAN

BELGIUM: Anderlecht's Swedish midfielder, Par Zetterburg, is voted Belgian Footballer of the Year, only the third foreigner to win the honour. Runner-up is Josip Weber of Cercle with Antwerp's Hans-Peter Lehnhoff third.

BRAZIL: The Brazilian confederation is ordered to pay Pele £2million in damages for unauthorised use of his picture in a promotional sticker book in 1970.

HOLLAND: No place for Ruud Gullit in Holland's squad for the friendly against Tunisia.

ITALY: Inter call off Darko Pancev's proposed loan to Leipzig.

SPAIN: Real Madrid bounce back, winning 3-2 away to neighbours Atletico to earn a place in the Cup quarter-finals on aggregate.

SWITZERLAND: Neuchatel Xamax sign Bulgaria World Cup midfielder Trifon Ivanov on loan until the end of the season from Spanish Second Division club Betis Sevilla.

FRI 14 JAN

FRANCE: Paris SG and Marseille draw 1-1 in the Match of the Season in the Parc des Princes between the league's two top.

ITALY: Adriano Galliani, Milan's general manager, tells the judicial inquiry into the affairs of former Torino president Gianmauro Borsano about the under-the-counter £2million paid into a Swiss bank to help secure the transfer ot Gianluigi Lentini.

SPAIN: Second Division Betis of Sevilla sign the veteran Sweden striker Johnny Ekstrom who joins them after short-lived spells with Reggiana and Belenenses.

SWITZERLAND: UEFA admit Macedonia as the 47th prospective competitor into the draw for the qualifying rounds of the 1996 European Championship. However, an entry application from the "new" Yugoslavia is rejected.

SAT 15 JAN

ACTION: The US recover from 1-0 down to beat Norway 2-1 in a friendly international in Tempe . . . Everton beat Swindon 6-2 to mark the Premiership debut of their new manager, Mike Walker.

GERMANY: Doctors report a continued improvement in the condition of Oliver Moller, the Hamburg player stabbed at an indoor tournament in Stuttgart . . . Second Division Rot-Weiss decide to appeal against an accounts commission ruling that financial problems means their professional licence should be withdrawn.

TEAM OF THE MONTH

SWEDEN . . .

for striking a first World Cup psychological blow with their victory over the United States, Colombia and Bolivia in the Joe Robbie Cup.

SUN 16 JAN

ACTION: Yomiuri Verdy secure the first J.League championship in Japan after their play-off final second leg against Kashima Antlers ends in a 1-1 draw; Yomiuri win 3-1 on aggregate . . . Milan are held 0-0 in Italy by Genoa but stay three points clear because Juventus are held 0-0 by Roma and Sampdoria lose 2-1 to Piacenza. Juventus have Jurgen Kohler sent off, for trying to break up a scrap between two other players . . . La Coruna continue at the top in Spain after winning 3-1 in Valencia. Troubled Real Madrid beat Zaragoza 3-2 while Barcelona draw 0-0 at Sevilla and have Romario sent off.

ENGLAND: Football Association sources hint that the appointment of Terry Venables as new England manager is imminent.

GERMANY: Struggling Leipzig succeed at last in signing ex-Yugoslav striker Darko Pancev on loan from Internazionale of Milan until the end of the season. The loan will cost Leipzig £100,000.

MON 17 JAN

BELGIUM: Dirk Devriese, who broke the eye socket of Ekeren defender Mike Verstraeten with his elbow in a league match in 1991, is sentenced to a two-month suspended jail term for the incident which occurred when he was playing for RWD Molenbeek. Devriese has since joined Gent. The Antwerp court also orders Devriese to pay 180 and one franc in nominal damages.

GERMANY: Hamburg's Valdas Ivanauakas is voted Footballer of the Year for the third successive year in Lithuania . . . Nurnberg defender Jorg Dittwer quits at 30 after the failure of a third knee operation . . . Uwe Jahnig rejects interest from Eintracht Frankfurt to extend his contract with Dresden . . . second division crisis club Rot-Weiss Essen appoint Wolfgang Frank, former international goalkeeper, as new coach.

POLAND: Reports leak out that players in the Polish squad which finished Olympic runners-up to Spain in Barcelona in 1992 tested positive for the steroid testosterone on the eve of the trip to the Games but that the test results were hidden by the Polish federation.

SPAIN: Emilio Cruz quits as coach to Atletico Madrid two months and one week after succeeding Jair Pereira. Chief scout Jose Luis Romero takes over as caretaker assisted by coaching aide Iselin Ovejero.

SWITZERLAND: Reports that UEFA will send an inspection team to the Berlin Olympic stadium raises speculation that it may be the venue for this season's Champions Cup Final . . . FIFA's end-of-year rankings confirm the provisional list announced on the eve of the World Cup draw in Las Vegas in December, with Germany top, ahead of Italy and Brazil. The award for the most improved team of the year goes to Colombia, up 14 places from 35 to 21.

TUE 18 JAN

BRAZIL: Top referee Jose Roberto Wright quits football, blaming disillusion with the game.

ECUADOR: Dusan Draskovic quits as national team coach after six years to coach Brazil's Bragantino.

GERMANY: Bayern coach Franz Beckenbauer says that Monaco's Arsene Wenger has been given until March 31 to accept or decline an offer to take over in Munich next season. Beckenbauer says: "Wenger has two major advantages: first, his outstanding work in his seven years with Monaco; secondly, the fact that he speaks perfect German."

ITALY: Milan confirm that Marco Van Basten, staying in Amsterdam for physiotherapy on his battered right ankle, will start his latest training comeback with former club Ajax.

JAPAN: Kazuyoshi Miura, of J.League champions Yomiuri Verdy, is voted Footballer of the Year after finishing as 20-goal top scorer among the league's Japanese players . . . Zico says he will retire after the first half of the new J.League season. He says his decision has nothing to do with his expulsion, for dissent over a penalty award, in Kashima Antlers' recent J.League play-off final defeat by Verdy.

SUDAN: Home club Al-Hilal quit the East and Central African semi-finals because of a row over a crowd invasion at a previous match involving Sudanese rivals Al-Merreikh.

SWITZERLAND: UEFA replaces Dutch referee John Blankenstein with Switzerland's Kurt Rothlisberger for the Supercup return between Milan and Parma to protect Blankenstein from unwarranted criticism because Parma, with eight players on one yellow card, face Ajax in the Cup-winners Cup quarter-finals.

WED 19 JAN

ACTION: Tunisia draw 2-2 with Holland, Spain are held 2-2 by Portugal.

FRANCE: More trouble for Marseille as the French league asks the Swiss federation for further information concerning the terms under which Servette loaned Brazilian striker Anderson da Silva to Marseille. French media reports say Servette agreed to continue paying part of his wages, which is forbidden.

GERMANY: Franz Beckenbauer appoints Lothar Matthaus new captain of Bayern Munich in succession to goalkeeper Raimond Aumann . . . the Germany v England match, set for Hamburg on April 20, the anniversary of Hitler's birth, is cancelled on security grounds.

SPAIN: Barcelona's Romario escapes with a four-game ban for punching Sevilla's Diego Simeone at the weekend. He could have been suspended for 12 matches.

SWEDEN: Malmo bid for Sheffield United's Swedish defender Jonas Wirmola, a £100,000 signing last autumn from Norway's Viking Stavanger.

THU 20 JAN

ACTION: Merreikh of Sudan beat Uganda Express 2-1 to win the Central and East African Football Club Association Cup in Khartoum. Santwo scores both Merreikh goals but is later sent off.

ENGLAND: Former Manchester United manager Sir Matt Busby dies aged 84.

FRANCE: Laurent Blanc withdraws for at least the next two games from the French team to try to help Saint Etienne move up the table.

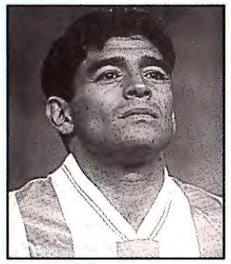
ITALY: A group of Dutch businessmen open negotiations to take a 50 per cent interest in cash crisis club Napoli, according to club president Francesco Ellenio Gallo. Napoli are 35million in debt.

JAPAN: Oleg Protasov, former Soviet Union striker, quits Olympiakos of Greece to sign for J.League club Gamba Osaka. In Japan already are former Soviet Union team-mates Sergei Aleinikov and Akhrik Tsveiba . . . Kashima's Zico is banned for four matches after being sent off for spitting on the ball in protest at a penalty decision in the J.League title play-off.

PORTUGAL: High winds damage a floodlit tower in Madeira and force Maritimo and Uniao to switch evening matches to daytime.

UNITED STATES: The Pasadena Rose Bowl, venue for the World Cup Final in July, is given a clean bill of health by engineers following the recent earthquake.

FRI 21 JAN



ARGENTINA: ***Diego Maradona (right)*** returns to duty for Newell's Old Boys in a friendly against Brazilian club Vasco da Gama. However he slips in the players' tunnel before the game, pulls a muscle and is a limping passenger.

BELGIUM: Luka Peruzovic quits as coach of Genk after only 10 games. Assistant Pierre Denier and former player Norbert Beuls take over.

ENGLAND: UEFA prepare for the following day's European Championship qualifying draw in Manchester by deciding to go to sudden death extra time at the knock-out stage of the finals in England in 1996.

GERMANY: DFB president Egidius Braun remains confident that the April 20 friendly against England will go ahead though not in Hamburg. Berlin and Gelsenkirchen both offer to stage the match.

ITALY: Milan decide to cut players' salaries. General manager Adriano Galliani says: "Signing-on fees will be reduced by up to 40 per cent. We will start to discuss this from next year because none of our players have contracts expiring this summer."

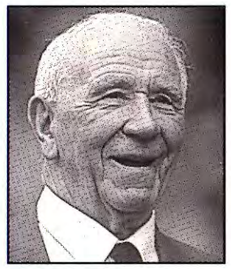
NORWAY: Top scorer Mons-Ivar Mjelde starts a trial with Portsmouth.

PORTUGAL: New government citizenship proposals will shut the loophole through which foreign players could obtain immediate qualification by marrying a Portuguese national.

RUSSIA: Nikita Simonian, deputy federation president, says the 14 rebel World Cup players will be axed from the squad bound for US '94 unless they drop their demand for the sacking of coach Pavel Sadyrin.

ZIMBABWE: Former national team player David Muchineripi is jailed for three years in Harare after pleading guilty to drug trafficking.

SAT 22 JAN



ACTION: The US and Switzerland draw 1-1 in California.

ENGLAND: A one-minute silence is observed at all grounds in memory of ***Sir Matt Busby (right)***. . . the draw for the 1996 Euro Championship qualifiers is — **Group 1:** France, Romania, Poland, Israel, Slovakia, Azerbaijan. **Group 2:** Denmark, Spain, Belgium, Macedonia, Cyprus, Armenia. **Group 3** *(5 teams):* Sweden, Switzerland, Hungary, Iceland, Turkey. **Group 4:** Italy, Ukraine, Croatia, Lithuania, Estonia, Slovenia. **Group 5:** Holland, Norway, Czech Republic, Byelorussia, Malta, Luxembourg. **Group 6:** Rep Ireland, Portgual, N. Ireland, Austria, Latvia, Liechtenstein. **Group 7:** Germany, Wales, Bulgaria, Georgia, Albania, Moldova. **Group 8:** Russia, Greece, Scotland, Finland, Faroe Islands, San Marino.

OBITUARY

TONY WADDINGTON, Stoke manager for 17 years from 1960, dies aged 69. Waddington made his name by specialising in prolonging the active life of veterans such as Dennis Viollet, Jimmy McIlroy, George Eastham and, most notably, Sir Stanley Matthews, to take Stoke back into the First Division in 1963 and later, in 1973, to victory in the League Cup.

SUN 23 JAN

ACTION: Saudi Arabia beat China 1-0 in Riyadh . . . Milan beat Piacenza 2-0 to open up a four-point lead in Italy . . . Real Madrid coach Benito Floro blames the Bernabeu pitch after a 0-0 draw at home to Osasuna.

ENGLAND: UEFA's executive committee decides to award three points for a victory in the qualifying stages of the 1996 European Championship.

LESOTHO: Fighting between rival army factions forces the postponement of an African club tie between local club Linare and St Denis of Reunion.

CAMEROON: Roger Milla, now 42, rejoins Tonnerre of Yaounde and says he hopes to make it into Cameroon's World Cup squad.

MON 24 JAN

FRANCE: The fraud trial opens of former Bordeaux president Claude Bez and his son, Eric, accused of embezzling £1.2million in a deal to build the club's training centre.

GERMANY: Nurnberg president Gerhard Voack resigns after death threats which followed the departure of coach Willi Entenmann.

ITALY: Atalanta goalkeeper Fabrizio Ferron is released from hospital after undergoing heart massage on the pitch the previous day after his collision with Reggiana's Michele Padovano.

NEW ZEALAND: Bobby Clark, ex-Scotland and Aberdeen goalkeeper, is appointed national team coach.

PLAYER OF THE MONTH:

Par Zetterburg . . .

as consolation for his appalling luck — the diabetic who was voted Belgium's Footballer of the Year and was then ruled out of the rest of the season and the World Cup by a serious knee injury.

UKRAINE: Local newspapers report the launch in the western city of Uzhgorod later this year of the Carpathian Cup featuring the national teams of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine.

TUE 25 JAN

ITALY: Torino reach the Cup semi-finals, beating Piacenza 2-1 and 4-3 on aggregate.

PORTUGAL: Tomislav Ivic quits as coach to FC Porto to take up an appointment to the FIFA technical department.

RUSSIA: Only 26 of the 45-strong national squad attend a Moscow meeting summoned to discuss preparations for the World Cup and the warm-up trip to the US. This fuels further speculation about the threat to Pavel Sadyrin.

SPAIN: Real Madrid lose a Spanish Cup quarter-final first leg 2-1 away to Tenerife.

UKRAINE: Metalurg Zaporizha bring in eight new players and new coach Anatoly Kuksov as police open an inquiry into the club's alleged match-fixing and sale of cars and flats given by sponsors.

WED 26 JAN

ENGLAND: Rapid Vienna's Ralf Hasenhuttl starts a week's trial with Chelsea . . . Liverpool sell Israel striker Ronny Rosenthal to Tottenham for £250,000.

FRANCE: A bag of French fries, thrown at a visiting player by a Lille fan in December, costs the club a £500 fine.

GERMANY: The April 20 friendly against England is rearranged for Berlin's Olympic stadium.

ITALY: Parma thrash Foggia 6-1 to reach the semi-finals of the Italian Cup 9-1 on aggregate.

PORTUGAL: Bobby Robson, sacked just before Christmas by Sporting, is appointed new coach of champions FC Porto in succession to Tomislav Ivic.

UNITED STATES: The US confirm a match against South Korea on March 12 to raise money for victims of the earthquake in Los Angeles.

THU 27 JAN

FRANCE: Monaco are drawn away to Toulouse in the second round draw for the French Cup.

GERMANY: Darko Pancev arrives at last in Leipzig to start his loan spell from Internazionale . . . the DFB says the match against England in Berlin may be brought forward a day to avert the threat of violence.

PORTUGAL: Sporting buy Brazilian defender Lula (Luis Bras) from Sao Paulo. He had returned to Brazil two years ago after a first spell in Portugal with Famalicao.

SWITZERLAND: A newspaper poll of 6,000 readers produces a 79 per cent vote in favour of veteran defender Andy Egli being dropped from the national team . . . FIFA creates a special award for the team playing the most entertaining soccer at US '94.

UKRAINE: Kiev Dynamo's interim boss, Viktor Medvedchuk, is nominated by the club to stand in forthcoming parliamentary elections. Kiev president Hrihory Surkis says: Medvedchuk was the first person to try to put soccer's legal affairs in order. He deserves to be in parliament.

global TRANSFERS

(Loan moves in italics)

Neil **ADAMS**	F	Oldham Athletic	Norwich City
Ezekiel **ALAMU**	M	Stationery Stores (Nig)	Kispest-Honved
Nathan **BLAKE**	F	Cardiff City	Sheffield United
MARLON BRANDAO	F	Boavista	Real Valladolid
John **CLARK**	D	Dundee United	Stoke City
Gordon **COWANS**	M	Aston Villa	Derby County
Toto **DAHLUM**	F	FC Start	Rosenborg
*Thomas **DOLL***	*M*	*Lazio*	*Eintracht Frankfurt*
Emeka **EZENGO**	M	AaB Aalborg	Kispest-Honved
Willie **FALCONER**	M	Sheffield United	Celtic
Ruel **FOX**	F	Norwich City	Newcastle United
*Marco **GRASSI***	*M*	*FC Zurich*	*Servette*
*Thomas **HELVEG***	*M*	*OB Odense*	*Udinese*
Scott **HOWIE**	G	Clyde	Norwich City
Gregorz **LEWANDOWSKI**	D	Wisla Krakow	Logrones
Zsolt **LIMPERGER**	M	Real Burgos	Celta Vigo
*Pal **LYDERSEN***	*D*	*Arsenal*	*IK Start*
Jim **MAGILTON**	M	Oxford United	Southampton
Serge Alain **MAGUY**	M	Africa Sports (IC)	Atletico Madrid
Craig **MASKELL**	F	Swindon Town	Southampton
Frank **McAVENNIE**	F	Celtic	Swindon Town
Alan **McINALLY**	F	Bayern Munich	Kilmarnock
Ray **McKINNON**	M	Nottingham Forest	Aberdeen
Kevin **SCOTT**	D	Newcastle United	Tottenham Hotspur
Magdi **TOLBA**	M	PAOK Salonika	Levski Sofia
Otto **VINCZE**	D	Sion	MTK Budapest
Jonas **WIRMOLA**	D	Sheffield United	Malmo

WHAT'S ON

MARCH

SATURDAY, MARCH 12
International: US v South Korea (Fullerton, California).

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16
Champions League: Barcelona v Moscow Spartak, Galatasaray v Monaco, Werder Bremen v Milan, Porto v Anderlecht. **Cup-winners Cup — quarter-finals, 2nd leg:** Parma v Ajax, Arsenal v Torino, Bayer Leverkusen v Benfica, Paris SG v Real Madrid. **UEFA Cup — Quarter-finals, 2nd leg:** Internazionale v Borussia Dortmund, Juventus v Cagliari, Austria Salzburg v Eintracht Frankfurt, Karlsruhe v Boavista.

SUNDAY, MARCH 20
Internationals: Bulgaria v Saudi Arabia *(or March 23)*.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23
Internationals: Germany v Italy (Stuttgart), Republic of Ireland v Russia, Luxembourg v Morocco, Spain v Croatia.

SATURDAY, MARCH 26
African Nations Cup finals, Group A: Tunisia v Mali (Tunis). **Group B:** Nigeria v Gabon (Tunis). **International:** United States v opponent to be confirmed (Dallas).

SUNDAY, MARCH 27
African Nations Cup finals, Group C: Ivory Coast v Sierra Leone (Sousse). **Group D:** Ghana v Guinea (Sousse).

MONDAY, MARCH 28
African Nations Cup finals, Group A: Zaire v Mali (Tunis). **Group B:** Egypt v Gabon (Tunis).

TUESDAY, MARCH 29
African Nations Cup finals, Group C: Zambia v Sierra Leone (Sousse). **Group D:** Senegal v Guinea (Sousse). **International:** Saudi Arabia v Chile.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30
African Nations Cup finals, Group A: Tunisia v Zaire (Tunis). **Group B:** Nigeria v Egypt (Tunis). **Champions League:** Moscow Spartak v Monaco, Barcelona v Galatasaray, Milan v Anderlecht, Werder Bremen v Porto. **Cup-winners Cup — Semi-finals, 1st leg. UEFA Cup — Semi-finals, 1st leg. Internationals:** France v Chile (Lyon), Republic of Ireland v Norway.

THURSDAY, MARCH 31
African Nations Cup finals, Group C: Ivory Coast v Zambia (Sousse). **Group D:** Ghana v Senegal (Sousse).

APRIL

SATURDAY, APRIL 2
African Nations Cup finals, quarter-finals: Winner Gp A v Runner-up Gp B (Tunis), Winner Gp B v Runner-up Gp A (Tunis).

SUNDAY, APRIL 3
African Nations Cup finals, quarter-finals: Winner Gp C v Runner-up Gp D (Sousse), Winner Gp D v Runner-up Gp C (Sousse).

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6
African Nations Cup finals, semi-finals: Winner q-f 1 v Winner q-f 4 (Tunis), Winner q-f 3 v Winner q-f 2 (Tunis). **International:** Turkey v Morocco (Ankara).

SUNDAY, APRIL 10
African Nations Cup finals, 3rd place play-off: semi-final losers (Tunis). **Final:** semi-final winners (Tunis).

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13
Champions League: Monaco v Barcelona, Galatasaray v Moscow Spartak, Anderlecht v Werder Bremen, Porto v Milan. **Cup-winners Cup — Semi-finals, 2nd leg. UEFA Cup — Semi-finals, 2nd leg.**

FRI 28 JAN

BELGIUM: Standard Liege's Luxembourg midfielder Guy Hellers is ruled out for three months by a knee injury.

ENGLAND: In an amazing managerial day, Terry Venables is appointed England manager, John Toshack of Real Sociedad is appointed part-time Wales manager (with ex-boss Mike Smith as man-on-the-spot) and Jimmy Nicholl is appointed caretaker of Northern Ireland. Simultaneously, controversial Graeme Souness quits as manager of Liverpool.

FRANCE: Marseille beat Monaco 2-1.

SWITZERLAND: UEFA ban Bulgarian club Botev Plovdiv from European competition for one year for an alleged attempt to bribe a disciplinary commission delegate.

TV

SKY SPORTS

SATURDAY 12 MARCH
09.30 .....SKY SOCCER WEEKEND
18.00 .....GERMAN LEAGUE FOOTBALL

SUNDAY 13 MARCH
11.00 .....WORLD SOCCER MAGAZINE
11.30 .....THE BOSS
12.00 .....FA CUP GOALS ON SUNDAY
16.30 .....FORD SUPER SUNDAY — LIVE
24.00 .....FORD SUPER SUNDAY

MONDAY 14 MARCH
12.00 .....FA PREMIERSHIP FOOTBALL
19.00 .....FA CUP FOOTBALL — LIVE — FA CUP QUARTER-FINALS

TUESDAY 15 MARCH
12.00 .....FA CUP FOOTBALL

WEDNESDAY 16 MARCH
12.00 .....GERMAN LEAGUE FOOTBALL
13.00 .....THE FOOTBALLERS' FOOTBALL SHOW
17.30 .....WORLD SOCCER MAGAZINE

THURSDAY 17 MARCH
07.30 .....SOCCER NEWS
22.00 .....SOCCER NEWS
22.15 .....ANDY GRAY'S BOOT ROOM
23.15 .....NETBUSTERS

FRIDAY 18 MARCH
07.45 .....NETBUSTERS
12.30 .....WORLD SOCCER MAGAZINE
13.00 .....ANDY GRAY'S BOOT ROOM
16.10 .....SKY SOCCER WEEKEND
21.30 .....SKY SOCCER WEEKEND

SATURDAY 19 MARCH
09.00 .....ANDY GRAY'S BOOT ROOM
10.00 .....SKY SOCCER WEEKEND

SUNDAY 20 MARCH
11.30 .....WORLD SOCCER MAGAZINE
12.00 .....FORD GOALS ON SUNDAY
13.30 .....THE BOSS
15.30 .....FORD SUPER SUNDAY — LIVE

MONDAY 21 MARCH
13.00 .....FA PREMIERSHIP FOOTBALL
19.00 .....FORD MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL — LIVE
24.30 .....FORD MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL

TUESDAY 22 MARCH
07.30 .....SOCCER NEWS
12.00 .....FA PREMIERSHIP FOOTBALL
22.00 .....SOCCER NEWS
24.15 .....GERMAN LEAGUE FOOTBALL

WEDNESDAY 23 MARCH
10.30 .....GERMAN LEAGUE FOOTBALL
12.00 .....THE FOOTBALLERS' FOOTBALL SHOW
17.30 .....WORLD SOCCER MAGAZINE
24.45 .....NETBUSTERS

FRIDAY 25 MARCH
07.45 .....NETBUSTERS
09.30 .....WORLD SOCCER MAGAZINE
16.10 .....SKY SOCCER WEEKEND
21.30 .....SKY SOCCER WEEKEND
02.00 .....THE FOOTBALLERS' FOOTBALL SHOW

SATURDAY 26 MARCH
07.00 .....SKY SOCCER WEEKEND
10.30 .....SCHOOLBOYS INTERNATIONAL — LIVE — NORTHERN IRELAND v SCOTLAND
01.30 .....SCHOOLBOYS INTERNATIONAL — NORTHERN IRELAND v SCOTLAND

SUNDAY 27 MARCH
12.00 .....FORD GOALS ON SUNDAY

MONDAY 28 MARCH
18.00 .....SOCCER NEWS
19.00 .....FORD MONDAY NIGHT — LIVE
22.15 .....SOCCER NEWS
24.30 .....FORD MONDAY NIGHT

TUESDAY 29 MARCH
07.30 .....SOCCER NEWS
13.00 .....FA PREMIERSHIP
17.30 .....SOCCER NEWS
22.30 .....SOCCER NEWS
22.45 .....THE FOOTBALLERS' FOOTBALL SHOW

WEDNESDAY 30 MARCH
07.30 .....SOCCER NEWS
12.00 .....GERMANY LEAGUE FOOTBALL
13.30 .....THE FOOTBALLERS' FOOTBALL SHOW
17.30 .....SOCCER NEWS
22.30 .....SOCCER NEWS
24.45 .....WORLD SOCCER MAGAZINE

THURSDAY 31 MARCH
09.30 .....WORLD SOCCER MAGAZINE
22.00 .....SOCCER NEWS
22.15 .....ANDY GRAY'S BOOT ROOM
24.15 .....FRENCH FOOTBALL LEAGUE

EUROSPORT

SATURDAY 12 MARCH
17.30 .....ROAD TO THE WORLD CUP

MONDAY 14 MARCH
17.30 .....ROAD TO THE WORLD CUP
22.00 .....EUROGOALS

TUESDAY 15 MARCH
13.00 .....ROAD TO THE WORLD CUP

WEDNESDAY 16 MARCH
11.00 .....EUROGOALS
22.00 .....THE EUROPEAN CUPS

THURSDAY 17 MARCH
11.00 .....THE EUROPEAN CUPS
21.00 .....THE EUROPEAN CUPS

FRIDAY 18 MARCH
11.00 .....THE EUROPEAN CUPS

MONDAY 21 MARCH
22.00 .....EUROGOALS
14.30 .....EUROGOALS

THURSDAY 24 MARCH
21.00 .....ROAD TO THE WORLD CUP

SATURDAY 26
17.00 .....LIVE: 1994 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP FROM TUNISIA — Nigeria v Gabon.

SUNDAY 27 MARCH
11.00 .....1994 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP FROM TUNISIA — Tunisia v Mali.
19.00 .....LIVE:1994 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP FROM TUNISIA — Ghana v Guinea.

MONDAY 28 MARCH
17.00 .....LIVE: 1994 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP FROM TUNISIA — Zaire v Mali
20.15 .....LIVE: 1994 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP FROM TUNISIA — Egypt v Gabon
23.15 EUROGOALS

TUESDAY 29 MARCH
11.00 .....EUROGOALS
16.00 .....EUROGOALS
17.00 .....LIVE: 1994 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP FROM TUNISIA — Zambia v Sierra Leone.
20.15 .....LIVE: 1994 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP FROM TUNISIA — Senegal v Guinea.

WEDNESDAY 30 MARCH
16.00 .....LIVE: 1994 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP FROM TUNISIA — Tunisia v Zaire.
19.15 .....LIVE: 1994 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP FROM TUNISIA — Nigeria v Egypt.
22.00 .....EUROPEAN CUPS

THURSDAY 31 MARCH
12.00 .....EUROPEAN CUPS
20.15 .....LIVE: 1994 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP FROM TUNISIA — Ghana v Senegal.
22.15 .....EUROPEAN CUPS

WORLDWIDE QUIZ

KNUT HASSLER of Bergen, Norway is this month's winner — with an all-correct entry — and a copy of the ***Guinness Football Fact Book*** is on its way. Next month could be your turn to win the prize, if you have a go at the following 10 teasers.

Answers on a *postcard* please to the usual address by April 10.

QUESTIONS

1. Who captained the England Under-23 team under Alf Ramsey, and the full international side under Joe Mercer, Don Revie and Ron Greenwood?

2. Name the player who was born in Brussels, the son of an Anderlecht forward, and is now with a German club after playing for two in Holland.

3. Which player appeared in England's League Cup Final in 1990, 1991 and 1992?

4. Who was capped by his country with a London club, four Italian clubs and then another London club?

5. Dennis Bergkamp of Ajax was top scorer in Holland in 1990-91. Who was second?

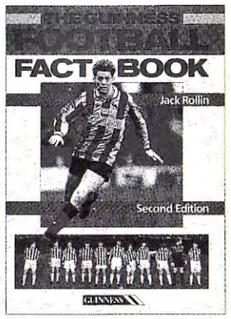
6. Name the country who are the current champions of the South Asian Federation.

7. Oswaldo MacKenzie plays in a South American country. Which one?

8. England fielded a new left-wing pairing in the match against Northern Ireland in 1954. Johnny Haynes won the first of his 56 caps at inside-left: who was his left-winger partner, playing his only game for his country?

9. How many players were sent off in the South American Supercup match between Gremio and Penarol earlier this season?

10. Which postwar player scored 20 goals for England, five of them against Scotland?



GUINNESS PUBLISHING

MARCH ANSWERS

1 Nine (Benfica have done so twice). **2** Foggia. **3** Ingvar Stadheim. **4** Rui Barros (four with Porto, two with Juventus, one with Monaco). **5** Nagoya Grampus Eight. **6** They all reached the Cup final and were relegated in the same season. **7** Bolivia. **8** Ljubomir Petrovic (Red Star Belgrade and Espanol). **9** Terry Yorath. **10** Anderlecht have played Arsenal, Spurs and West Ham.

lotto

X WORD

Compiled by Christine Ansell

LAST MONTH'S WINNER:
Henk Roelfs of Stadskanaal, Holland.

LAST MONTH'S SOLUTION

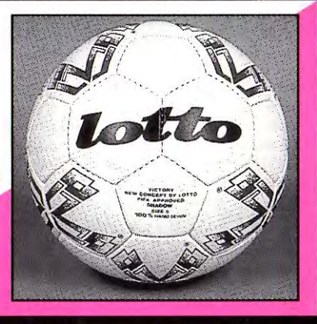
Across: 1 Meeuws, 3 Zsak, 7 Ristimaki, 9 Neno, 10 Pisont, 12 Svilar, 13 Oslo, 16 Owubokiri, 17 Ajax, 18 Shirak

Down: 1 Moran, 2 Weis, 4 Sliwowski, 5 Kieft, 6 .Baric, 8 San Nicola, 11 Valur, 12 Simba, 14 Osiek, 15 Roth.

WIN

A Lotto Football — for the first correct entry. Fill in this month's crossword and send it, by March 30, to:

***WS CROSSWORD* (APRIL), King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London, SE1 9LS.**



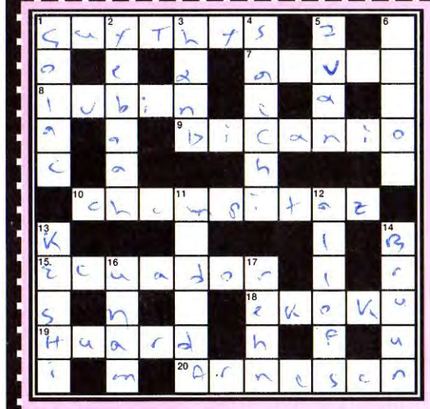
ACROSS

1 .....Coach of Belgium's 1986 World Cup semi-final side (3,4)
7 .....Boavista and Portugal midfielder with Guimaraes in 1991-92 (5)
8 .....1991 Polish League champions (5)
9 .....Juve's ex-Lazio 1992-93 UEFA Cup finalist currently serving Napoli (7)
10 .....Peru's most-capped player (9)
15 .....Copa America hosts, 1993 (7)
18 .....Ex-Bournemouth [illegible]ward in Norwich's UEFA Cup squad (5)
19 .....Goalkeeper wh[illegible]ned Bordeaux from Marseille in 1991 (5)
20 .....Eighties' Danish midfield star whose clubs included PSV (7)

DOWN

1 .....Former Yugoslav player in charge at Dundee United (5)
2 .....Ghanaian striker starring for Eintracht Frankfurt (6)
3 .....Jack Charlton's predecessor as Ireland's manager (4)
4 .....Former Milan coach directing Italy's World Cup campaign (6)
5 .....Young Sporting Gijon midfielder recruited by Barcelona last summer (4)
6 .....Left-winger in Man Utd's 1968 Champions Cup final side (5)
11 .....Ex-Kaiser Chiefs' South African forward in Turkey with Besiktas (6)
12 .....Recently retired German striker latterly with Marseille and Bremen (6)
13 .....Molenbeek defender formerly with Strasbourg (5)
14 .....Midfield stalwart, Morten, of Denmark's Silkeborg (5)
16 .....Mexican clu[illegible] side boasting goalscoring keeper, Jorge Campos (4)
17 .....IFK Gothenburg's Swedish midfield man, at Everton in 1989-90 (4)

APRIL



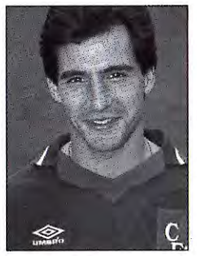
NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

Relentless Rovers

BLACKBURN'S seemingly vain pursuit of Manchester United at the top of the FA

Kenny Dalglish's Rovers have now reduced the gap to just four points, following a 2-0 home win over Liverpool while United were losing 1-0 at home to Chelsea, their first defeat in 34 games.



Gavin Peacock (right) scored the surprise winner at Old Trafford, just as he did when the sides met at Stamford Bridge in September.

Despite the defeat United remain favourites to retain the title and they do have a game in hand over Blackburn. United, however, must travel to Ewood Park in April for what could be the season's key game.

The title is now firmly between these two Lancashire neighbours because there is a 10-point gap between Rovers and third-placed Arsenal, who secured an excellent 0-0 draw in the away leg of their Cup-winners Cup quarter-final with Torino.

At the bottom of the table things are looking increasingly bleak for Tottenham, who have won only two games out of 20 since striker Teddy Sheringham was injured in October.

Tottenham have slithered steadily down the table, are now only five points clear of the relegation zone and have played more games than all those below them except Swindon. Their most recent results indicate the problems Ossie Ardiles' weakened side have been having. In a 1-1 draw at home to Aston Villa they missed two penalties, they missed another in a 4-3 defeat at Chelsea and then needed a late equaliser to force a 2-2 draw at home to Sheffield United, who have not won away all season.

Tottenham could soon find themselves embroiled in a battle for survival with Oldham and Sheffield United — two clubs more used to the relegation dog-fight.

The first of this season's Cup finals takes place at Wembley on March 20, when Notts County and Brescia contest the Anglo-Italian Cup Final.

Both sides are pushing for promotion, with County currently eighth in the First Division and Brescia fifth in Serie B, and when the two sides met in Italy in an earlier round of the competition, Brescia won 3-1.

That victory confirms Brescia as favourites for the final, and the promising Italians will be keen to take the Cup back to Italy following Cremonese's victory over Derby County last season.

Brescia's trump cards are the Romanian World Cup duo Gheorge Hagi and Ioan Sabau, players easily good enough to play in the Serie A.

A week after the Anglo-Italian Final Manchester United and Aston Villa meet in the Coca-Cola Cup Final, the first leg of a possible treble for the Red Devils.

But Villa manager Ron Atkinson has beaten United, one of his former clubs, in the final before, back in 1991 when his Sheffield Wednesday side won 1-0.

Wednesday were United's opponents in this season's semi-final, but could not capitalise on a good result in the first leg at Old Trafford, where they lost only 1-0. In the return they were swamped by a United onslaught and ended up losing 4-1 on the day and 5-1 on aggregate.

Villa's semi-final was far closer following a 3-1 defeat in the first leg away to First Division Tranmere. In the return Villa took a 2-0 lead after 23 minutes, but a John Aldridge penalty put Tranmere back in front after half an hour.

With just two minutes remaining Dalian Atkinson scored a third to send the game into extra time. With no further scoring the game went to penalties, and Villa won 5-4.

JOHN KELLY

Nicholas will battle on

WHETHER from a phonetic or a footballing point of view, names such as Carl Muggleton, Wayne Biggins and Willie Falconer do not easily trip off the tongue.

Project Lee Martin into the group and you have a better-known inclusion, largely due to his winning goal for Manchester United against Crystal Palace in the 1990 FA Cup Final replay.

These four players comprise the new face of Celtic, the result of Lou Macari's recent transfer dealings as Parkhead manager, trying to create his own team within the constraints of his budget.

Macari has had a frustrating time since he moved to Celtic from Stoke last October. Ongoing behind-the-scenes difficulties, as yet unresolved, have proved to be a constant distraction from matters on the field of play.

They had a particularly bad start to 1994, with a run of seven games without victory, including an inglorious exit from the Scottish Cup, against Motherwell.

Macari knows that a cash injection is vital. "We need some dosh to make a splosh" was his observation after a 2-0 win over Hearts at Tynecastle, which ended the team's barren start to the year and again showed the value of veteran striker Charlie Nicholas, who scored both goals. Nicholas (above) is one of six Parkhead players whose contracts expire at the end of the season.

"I want to end my career at Celtic," says 32-year-old Nicholas, who has won major honours with all his three clubs.

"They offered me a free transfer last year but I turned it down. I'm looking for a two-year deal and I'm confident that I can continue to make a contribution. I lack a bit of pace but that doesn't mean I can't fit in. Eric Cantona and Peter Beardsley have demonstrated that shortage of pace doesn't have to be a handicap if their team's system suits them. My skills lie in my abilities on the ball and the way in which I link with team-mates. If Celtic continue to adopt that type of system, then I know I can do a job for them."

Rangers strengthened their grip on the championship with an impressive mid-season burst of form which included a 2-0 win over challengers Hibernian. Injury victim Andy Goram took over in goal from Ally Maxwell to make his first appearance of the season.

At the other end, an intriguing struggle to escape relegation is developing. Due to League reconstruction, three teams will drop at the end of the season, and with Raith and Dundee both looking doomed, a number of clubs, including Hearts, St Johnstone and Partick Thistle, are battling to avoid the third berth.

ALAN FAIRLEY

Inter find goal touch

INTER CARDIFF continue to head the table, on goal difference from Ton Pentre, after a double demolition — 10-1 against Llanelli, and Briton Ferry 9-2 a week later . . . both AWAY.

Two games in hand should restore a six-point gap before too long.

Ton Pentre's defeat at reigning champions Cwmbran Town was a heavy blow and few commentators now believe that anyone can seriously challenge Inter.

Bangor City, third, lead the northern challenge and could well snatch the second UEFA Cup place if one is allocated under the new structure.

Their clash with Inter in the Welsh Cup ended 1-1, with the Cardiff side pinned back for most of the match. A semi-final against Barry awaits the winners after a solitary goal proved enough for Barry against Konica side Fflint Town.

The other semi-final is between Swansea, 1-0 winners over Hereford, and Ebbw Vale or Cardiff. A last-minute equaliser gave the professionals a second chance after Vale had led for most of the match.

The semi-finals are played over two legs.

Plans are being drawn up to enlarge the League by 1995-96. The idea is to bring the current second level leagues, the north's Cymru Alliance and the southern Abacus League First Division, under the National League's umbrella.

A Konica League Second Division North and South would strengthen the system and provide a controlled interim step for future First Division clubs.

MEL AP IOR THOMAS

Bryan back as boss

THE new national team manager, 47-year-old Bryan Hamilton, has been given a two-year contract to see Northern Ireland through to the end of their European Championship qualifying campaign.

Hamilton is a popular choice, though Billy Bingham's second in command, Jimmy Nicholl — manager of Scotland's Raith Rovers — had been favourite for the post.

If the cap fits . . . Northern Ireland's Bryan Hamilton.

This is the first time that the IFA have appointed a full-time manager, but the demands of international football, and the pressure to succeed at this level, have become so great that such an appointment is now necessary.

Hamilton, from North Belfast, played for Distillery and Linfield before moving to England in 1971 and playing with Ipswich, Everton, Swindon and Millwall before managing Tranmere, Leicester and Wigan.

He scored four international goals in 50 appearances between 1969 and 1979.

His first game in charge will be against World Cup hopefuls Romania at Windsor Park on March 23.

Ards won their first trophy for 20 years when they beat Crusaders 4-2 in the County Antrim Shield at the Oval. Bobby Brown, signed three days before the final from Dublin club Shelbourne, tipped the scales in favour of manager Roy Coyle's team.

Ards lost keeper Paul Kee to Oxford United just after the match, at the end of his loan transfer. Kee made a fine gesture when he gave his winner's medal to winger Andy Beattie, who has missed the final through suspension.

Struggling Larne appointed Jim Hagan as manager on Billy Sinclair's resignation after a 4-1 home defeat by Coleraine in the Irish Cup. Larne had won only three of their 19 matches under Sinclair.

At the start of the season Hagan was at Ballymena, but since his dismissal a few months ago had been playing in the Carrick Rangers defence alongside former international John McClelland.

ROY KITSON

RESULTS

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man Utd	28	20	7	1	57	25	67
Blackburn	28	18	6	4	42	20	60
Arsenal	29	12	12	5	33	16	48
Leeds	28	12	10	6	41	29	46
Newcastle	28	13	6	9	47	30	45
Aston Villa	27	12	8	7	36	27	44
Liverpool	29	12	8	9	48	40	44
Sheffield Wed	28	11	10	7	52	37	43
Norwich	28	10	12	6	46	36	42
QPR	27	11	6	10	42	36	39
Coventry	29	9	11	9	32	32	38
Wimbledon	27	9	9	9	31	38	36
West Ham	28	9	9	10	25	35	36
Ipswich	28	7	12	9	23	30	33
Everton	30	9	6	15	33	41	33
Tottenham	29	7	9	13	36	39	30
Southampton	28	8	3	17	31	41	27
Chelsea	27	6	8	13	26	36	26
Oldham	28	6	8	14	24	47	26
Man City	28	5	10	13	23	37	25
Sheffield Utd	28	4	11	13	22	42	23
Swindon	30	4	11	15	34	70	23

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, JANUARY 23

MIDWEEK

FA CUP — 3RD RND

BRISTOL CITY 1
LIVERPOOL 1

FA CUP — 3RD RND REPLAYS

LUTON 1
SOUTHEND 0

BATH 1
STOKE 4

CARLISLE 0
SUNDERLAND 1

IPSWICH 2
SWINDON 1

PORT VALE 1
SOUTHAMPTON 0

CHELSEA 4
BARNET 0

EVERTON 2
BOLTON 3

MIDDLESBROUGH 1
CARDIFF 2

NOTTINGHAM FOREST 0
SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY 2

PORTSMOUTH 1
BLACKBURN 3

TOTTENHAM 1
PETERBOROUGH 1
Tottenham won 5-4 on pens

WEEKEND

MAN UTD 1 (Giggs 27)
EVERTON 0. **Att:** 44,750.

ARSENAL 1 (Wright 45 pen)
OLDHAM 1 (Sharp 4). **Att:** 26,524.

SOUTHAMPTON 2 (Cole 38, Maddison 5)
NEWCASTLE 1 (Le Tissier 83). **Att:** 32,129.

LIVERPOOL 2 (Rush 22, 90)
MAN CITY 1 (Griffiths 3). **Att:** 41,872.

SHEFFIELD WED 3 (Bright 58, Pearce 61, Watson 70)
SHEFFIELD UTD 1 (Whitehouse 87 pen).
Att: 34,959.

QPR 1 (White 25)
COVENTRY 0. **Att:** 12,107.

CHELSEA 1 (Stein 67)
ASTON VILLA 1 (Saunders 39). **Att:** 18,341.

IPSWICH 0
WIMBLEDON 0. **Att:** 12,372.

SWINDON 2 (Fjortoft 38, Whitbread 80)
TOTTENHAM 1 (Barmby 30). **Att:** 16,563.

BLACKBURN 2 (Shearer 12, 90)
LEEDS 1 (Speed 77). **Att:** 16,938.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

MIDWEEK

WEST HAM 3 (M. Allen 37, S. Jones 46, Morley 84)
NORWICH 3 (Sutton 5, 56, Fox 79). **Att:** 20,738.

FA CUP — 3RD RND REPLAY

LIVERPOOL 0
BRISTOL CITY 1

COCA-COLA (LEAGUE) CUP — QUARTER-FINAL

NOTTM FOREST 1 (Gemmill 75)
TRANMERE 1 (Malkin 51). **Att:** 20,066.

COCA-COLA (LEAGUE) CUP — QUARTER-FINAL REPLAY

PORTSMOUTH 0
MAN UTD 1 (McClair 27). **Att:** 24,950.

WEEKEND

FA CUP — 4TH RND

CARDIFF 1
MAN CITY 0

CHARLTON 0
BLACKBURN 0

CHELSEA 1
SHEFF WED 1

GRIMSBY 1
ASTON VILLA 2

IPSWICH 3
TOTTENHAM 0

KIDDERMINSTER 1
PRESTON 0

NEWCASTLE 1
LUTON 1

NOTTS CO 1
WEST HAM 1

OLDHAM 0
STOKE CITY 0

OXFORD 2
LEEDS 2

PLYMOUTH 2
BARNSLEY 2

PORT VALE 0
WOLVES 2

WIMBLEDON 2
SUNDERLAND 1

NORWICH 0
MAN UTD 2

COCA-COLA (LEAGUE) CUP — QUARTER-FINAL

TRANMERE 2 (Nevin 27, Thomas 89)
NOTTM FOREST 0. **Att:** 12,578.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6

MIDWEEK

COVENTRY 1 (Flynn 5)
IPSWICH 0. **Att:** 1,265.

FA CUP — 4TH RND

BOLTON 2 (McAteer 31, Coyle 86)
ARSENAL 2 (Wright 51, Adams 60). **Att:** 18,891.

WEEKEND

BLACKBURN 3 (Shearer 7 pen, Wilcox 30, Ripley 39)
WIMBLEDON 0. **Att:** 16,215.

NORWICH 2 (Sutton 12, 63)
LIVERPOOL 2 (Culverhouse 53 og, Barnes 76).
Att: 19,746.

MAN CITY 2 (Griffiths 32, Flitcroft 73)
IPSWICH 1 (Marshall 16). **Att:** 28,188.

OLDHAM 2 (McCarthy 33, Bernard 39)
SOUTHAMPTON 1 (Le Tissier 26). **Att:** 9,982.

QPR 2 (Wilson 44 pen, Ferdinand 65)
MAN UTD 3 (Kanchelskis 18, Cantona 45, Giggs 59).
Att: 21,267.

TOTTENHAM 1 (Rosenthal 66)
SHEFFIELD WED 3 (Coleman 17, Bright 54, 62).
Att: 23,078.

ASTON VILLA 1 (Townsend 70)
LEEDS 0. **Att:** 26,793.

SWINDON 3 (Fjortoft 8, 35 pen, 79 pen)
COVENTRY 1 (Darby 53). **Att:** 14,640.

EVERTON 4 (Ebbrell 5, Rideout 26, 39, Angell 85)
CHELSEA 2 (Stein 24, 86 pen). **Att:** 18,821.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13

MIDWEEK

FA CUP — 4TH RND

STOCKPORT 0
BRISTOL CITY 4 (Shail 4, Allison 47, 58, 68).
Att: 7,691.

FA CUP — 4TH RND REPLAYS

BLACKBURN 0
CHARLTON 1 (Pitcher 15). **Att:** 15,438.

ARSENAL 1 (Smith 36)
BOLTON 3 (McGinlay 20, McAteer 99, Walker 115).
Att: 33,863.

BARNSLEY 1 (O'Connel 65)
PLYMOUTH 0. **Att:** 10,912.

LEEDS 2 (Strachan 88, White 90)
OXFORD 3 (Elliot 57, Allen 62, Magilton 111).
Att: 22,167.

LUTON 2 (Hartson 11, Oakes 77)
NEWCASTLE 0. **Att:** 12,503.

SHEFFIELD WED 1 (Bright 37)
CHELSEA 3 (Spencer 7, Peacock 96, Burley 115).
Att: 26,114.

STOKE 0
OLDHAM 1 (Beckford 31). **Att:** 19,,871.

WEST HAM 1 (Chapman 117)
NOTTS COUNTY 0. **Att:** 23,373.

WEEKEND

TOTTENHAM 0
BLACKBURN 2 (Shearer, Gallacher 72). **Att:** 30,236.

NORWICH 1 (Ekoku 58)
ARSENAL 1 (Campbell 34). **Att:** 17,667.

WIMBLEDON 4 (Earle 9, Blissett 26, Fashanu 55, Holdsworth 63)
NEWCASTLE 2 (Beardsley 50 pen, 90 pen).
Att: 13,358.

LEEDS v SHEFFIELD WED — *postponed*

ASTON VILLA 5 (Saunders 31, 66pen 84 pen, Froggatt 55, Richardson 73)
SWINDON 0. **Att:** 26,637.

MAN CITY 0
WEST HAM 0. **Att:** 29,118.

SHEFFIELD UTD 0
COVENTRY 0. **Att:** 15,391.

EVERTON 0
IPSWICH 0. **Att:** 19,558.

OLDHAM 2 (Jobson 17, Sharp 81)
CHELSEA 1 (Spencer 52). **Att:** 12,022.

PREMIER DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rangers	30	15	10	5	53	30	40
Aberdeen	30	12	14	4	41	24	38
Motherwell	30	15	8	7	41	30	38
Hibernian	30	13	9	8	45	34	35
Celtic	30	10	13	7	35	26	33
Dundee Utd	30	8	15	7	32	29	31
Kilmarnock	30	8	13	9	24	30	29
Partick	30	9	10	11	34	42	28
St Johnstone	30	6	14	10	27	37	26
Hearts	30	6	13	11	22	32	25
Raith	30	4	13	13	29	52	21
Dundee	30	4	8	18	27	44	16

WEEK ENDING, SUNDAY JANUARY 23

MIDWEEK

RAITH 1 (Dalziel 6)
ST JOHNSTONE 1 (Torfason 82 pen). **Att:** 3,693.

CELTIC 2 (Byrne 30, McStay 59)
ABERDEEN 2 (Irvine 31, Jess 49). **Att:** 19,083.

WEEKEND

ABERDEEN 0
RANGERS 0. **Att:** 21,500.

PARTICK 0
MOTHERWELL 0. **Att:** 5,592.

DUNDEE 2 (Shaw 31 pen, Blake 57)
RAITH ROVERS 2 (Blake 20 og, Dalziel 84).
Att: 3,934.

CELTIC 0
DUNDEE UTD 0. **Att:** 17,235.

ST JOHNSTONE 2 (Wright 44, Dodds 76)
HIBERNIAN 2 (O'Neill 67 pen, Jackson 83).
Att: 5,817.

HEARTS 1 (Geddes 6 og)
KILMARNOCK 1 (MacPherson 43). **Att:** 9,204.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

MIDWEEK

ST JOHNSTONE 1 (Torfason 90)
DUNDEE UTD 1 (Brewster 5). **Att:** 5,758.

MOTHERWELL 3 (Coyne 32, Kirk 60, McGrillen 78)
RAITH ROVERS 1 (Cameron 43). **Att:** 5,016.

WEEKEND

SCOTTISH CUP — 3RD RND

AIRDRIE 1
DUNFERMLINE 1

ALLOA v ROSS COUNTY — *postponed*

ARBROATH 2
DUNDEE UTD 3

CLYDEBANK 1
DUNDEE 1

EAST STIRLING v ABERDEEN — *postponed*

HIBERNIAN 2
CLYDE 1

KILMARNOCK 2
AYR 1

MORTON 2
COWDENBEATH 2

MOTHERWELL 1
CELTIC 0

PARTICK 0
HEARTS 1

RAITH ROVERS 2
BRECHIN 0

RANGERS 4)
DUMBARTON 1

ST JOHNSTONE 2
HAMILTON 0

ST MIRREN 2
MONTROSE 0

STIRLING 1
BERWICK 0

STRANRAER 2
FALKIRK 1

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6

WEEKEND

DUNDEE UTD 1 (Connolly 14)
DUNDEE 1 (Ristic 77). **Att:** 10,630.

HIBERNIAN 3 (Wright 60, 72, Lennon 86)
ABERDEEN 1 (Richardson 16). **Att:** 9,550.

KILMARNOCK 0
ST. JOHNSTONE 0. **Att:** 7,500.

MOTHERWELL 1 (Foster 44 og)
HEARTS 1 (Robertson 4). **Att:** 6,345.

RAITH ROVERS 0
CELTIC 0. **Att:** 7,680.

RANGERS 5 (Durie 27, 73, Mikhalichenko 34, McCall 69, Steven 85)
PARTICK 1 (Cameron 80). **Att:** 42,610.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13

MIDWEEK

ST JOHNSTONE 2 (Dodds 26. Ferguson 42)
MOTHERWELL 1 (Coyne 10). **Att:** 4,522.

SCOTTISH CUP — 3RD RND

ALLOA 2
ROSS COUNTY 0

EAST STIRLING 1
ABERDEEN 3

SCOTTISH CUP — 3RD RND REPLAYS

DUNFERMLINE 1
AIRDRIE 3

DUNDEE 2
CLYDEBANK 1

COWDENBEATH 1
MORTON 2

WEEKEND

DUNDEE UTD 1 (Brewster 18)
MOTHERWELL 2 (Bowman 39 og, Van der Hoom 45 og). **Att:** 6,573.

ABERDEEN 4 (Paatelainen 43, 77, Shearer 74, Booth 78)
RAITH ROVERS 0. **Att:** 10,800.

KILMARNOCK 1 (Mitchell 43)
PARTICK 2 (Craig 46, Grant 76). **Att:** 7,511.

ST JOHNSTONE 1 (Dodds 37)
DUNDEE 1 (Farningham 25). **Att:** 5,517.

RANGERS 2 (Durie 37, Steven 81)
HIBERNIAN 0. **Att:** 43,265.

HEARTS 0
CELTIC 2 (Nicholas 43, 83),.**Att:** 14,049.

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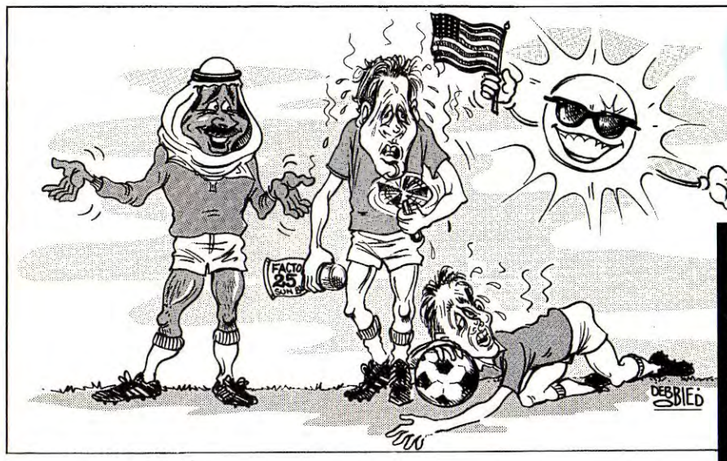

FORGOTTEN FINN

TREVOR — The new generation of superstars subject of a recent feature in *WORLD SOCCER*, had one person missing. Haven't you noticed a great player from Ajax Amsterdam, called Jari Litmanen?

Litmanen is good and learning to be better.

— ANNE POTRY, Luumaki, Finland.

❒ I HAVE to be careful here — my wife is Finnish too! Litmanen has not gone unnoticed, but it is too early for him to be included in the superstar bracket. Ajax must be delighted at his progress, though Finland's meagre five points from 10 World Cup qualifying games hardly helped champion his cause. The Finns are in the same qualifying group as Scotland for the European Championship, and I am looking forward to getting more opportunities to assess his progress.

LANCS LINKS

TREVOR — People talk about today's Manchester United team as though we haven't seen such attractive football since the 1960s. Yet I remember the Liverpool team of 1987-1990 dominating the League in similar fashion.

United produce swift attacking football with plenty of trickery, but I don't think they match that Liverpool team.

Their playing record was better and they scored more goals.

Which would you say was the better side?

— JEFF HANNAN, Reading, Berkshire.

❒ THE era you pinpoint involved the latter stages of Kenny Dalglish the player plus Barnes, Rush, Beardsley, McMahon and Hansen. I found that team just as exciting as the current Manchester United side. Potentially United could become just as difficult to dislodge. The most pleasing factor is that both prove you can entertain and win trophies at the same time.

VIDEO EVIDENCE

TREVOR — I receive many games on tape from two friends I have in England and see three main problems about your football.

The central defenders are very bad in general, the quality of the passing is also very bad, and the season is very hard with too many games because the divisions are too big and not all teams have the right quality for their levels.

I still think that a game between two English sides is very exciting, and even if you didn't reach US '94, not everything about your football is bad.

— ARMANDO ROCHA, Sines Codex, Portugal.

❒ I ACCEPT your three main criticisms, but believe there is an encouraging trend this season towards improving passing. Those central defenders you mention must improve their technique because without that it is extremely difficult to build up play constructively. A reduction in the number of matches is a constant argument, and could be solved by reducing the Premier League to 18 clubs. Potential loss of revenue ends the argument.

FIND THE GAP

TREVOR — England's elimination from the World Cup, and the 40th anniversary of our historic defeat by Hungary have given football writers and commentators another opportunity to tell us what we all love to hear: that we cannot play the game and never have been able to.

Had the lottery of a penalty shoot-out gone the other way three years ago, England might well have been the first country to qualify for the 1994 World Cup finals . . . as holders.

The fact that so many qualifying places were decided on the last game indicates the levelling which has taken place worldwide, and clearly there are several cases where the gap between teams going to America and those staying behind (including the European champions), is a narrow one — where it exists at all.

It is time to cheer up and put things into perspective.

— PETER HARTLAND, Crowborough, East Sussex.

❒ I AM not too despondent, but still find it desperately frustrating to envisage the World Cup without England. There was sufficient talent for them to have qualified, but they would have been unlikely challengers. Terry Venables should steer the national team back towards a more pleasing style of play, and encourage more skill and flair. There has been a significant levelling out across the world, and this summer's tournament seems as open as any.

HEAT OF THE MOMENT

TREVOR — Based on recent weather records, temperatures will reach 90 degrees Fahrenheit for about a third of the World Cup matches in the US.

What do you think will be the effect of such searing heat on the quality of play?

— JOHN SARICH, Sacramento, California.

❒ IT won't be that different from Mexico in 1986, and that didn't suffer too badly from heat and humidity. Some of the Europeans won't relish daytime matches, but the ability to adapt their play in all conditions is the ultimate test. No side can afford to squander possession to easily, as it will be hard work getting it back. The searing heat is bound to cause the play to be somewhat spasmodic.

POINTS FOR GOALS

TREVOR — I enjoy watching attacking soccer, and I have an idea which I think would promote this: one point for each goal scored, in addition to those for a win or a draw.

A 3-1 win for Liverpool over Manchester United would be six points for Liverpool and one point for United. A 2-2 draw could be three points for both sides.

— KENT NEWMAN, Neptune, New York State, United States.

❒ THE initial step towards encouraging attacking soccer is three points for a win, to be used in the World Cup. It has helped enormously in the English League system in recent seasons. The only other possible adjustment is to offer a second point for a scoring draw, but I am happy to see how the first change works.

STRATEGIC PLANS

TREVOR — I have been a fencer, racketball player, American footballer, hang glider pilot, chess player and soccer player and coach. The only one of those activities where I find little mention of strategy is soccer.

My coaches have concentrated on individual skills. Most books offer a token discussion about formations, as if choosing between a 4-4-2 and a 4-3-3 are the limits of team co-ordination. I can see by watching the Italians that this is not so, but I have never seen a written word from which I can learn to do likewise. I would love to know where I can learn more.

— BOB LACATENA, Chicago, Illinois, US.

❒ THERE are a number of coaching books available and I suppose the Football Association can notify you of the alternatives. Soccer strategy is a personal subject, and one which primarily comes out of experiences both as player and coach. Tactical awareness is something which is forever expanding as your knowledge increasing, but a system suitable against one side quite often is totally inappropriate for the next.

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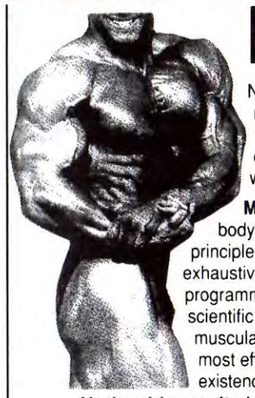

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JAPAN

Falcao is the new boss

BRAZILIAN Falcao has been appointed to succeed Dutchman Hans Ooft as manager of Japan.

The change is indicative of the Football Association of Japan's eagerness to explore every option in good time for the 1998 World Cup.

Falcao (right) led a Mexican club, America, after losing the Brazil post in 1991, then took over at his old club, Internacional, last year.

Like Ooft two years ago, Falcao's first games will be in the Kirin Cup in May. In 1991, the opponents were Argentina and Wales. This year, Argentina and France are expected.

Then, in the autumn, the Asian Games will be held in Hiroshima. site of Ooft's success in the Asian Cup.

Another foreign manager, Gordon Milne, joined Nagoya Grampus Eight for a training camp in Okinawa. The focus of early training sessions was on the speed and fluency of passing.

He arrived with a special technical coach, Ian Wilson, who was with Milne at Leicester and Besiktas of Turkey. Wilson's contract in Japan is initially for two months, but he may stay on.

Milne's first success was to persuade disgruntled striker Yasuyuki Moriyama to stay after he had all but signed for Gamba Osaka. He relented, saying: "Mr Milne is a good manager. The team should get better now."

Gamba, however, have lost striker Akihiro Nagashima to Shimizu S Pulse. Having signed Nagashima, Shimizu have broken off talks with Palmeiras striker Evair.

Irish international Gerry Peyton (Fulham and Bournemouth) has signed as goalkeeping coach of Jubilo Iwata, under Ooft.

Yanmar Diesel, have chosen a new name — Cerczo ("Cherry Bloom") Osaka. The cherry is the official flower of Osaka City.

MIKE PLASTOW AND MICHI ISHIJIMA

SAUDI ARABIA

Solari for Saudi

JORGE SOLARI, one of Sir Alf Ramsey's Argentinian "animals" from 1966, is Saudi Arabia's latest World Cup coach.

He takes over from Dutchman Leo Beenhakker, who was fired after barely three months in the job, following a demonstration of player power. They were upset that Beenhakker was working them twice daily in training instead of the three-times-a-week sessions with which they been comfortable under Jose Candido.

He, of course, was the Brazilian coach who was dismissed halfway through the World Cup qualifiers because he dared disobey an edict from his federation president, who wanted him to substitute his keeper during a match against Iraq.

The Saudis engaged Beenhakker because of his wide experience of the world game and, in particular, knowledge of World Cup management through his work as manager of Holland four years ago in Italy.

He had appointed a number of Dutch aides, including Wim Jansen, who was persuaded to abandon his work in rebuilding Feyenoord to join Beenhakker.

Now Beenhakker and Jansen are taking their knowledge of the Saudis back with them to Holland where they will, at the request of the KNVB, turn it over to Dick Advocaat for his direct use against the Saudis in the United States.

Beenhakker said: "I am sorry things worked out as they did. I accept that our styles of work were not compatible and I was too hard on the players, but I have no regrets."

The Saudis were expected to appoint another Brazilian in Beenhakker's place, even perhaps to try to lure Tele Santana — who previously had worked in Saudi Arabia — from Sao Paulo. Instead, they took advantage of a visit from the Argentinian President, Carlos Menem, to negotiate Solari's surprise signing.

Solari was a midfield member of the Argentinian World Cup side who fell to England amid controversy in the 1966 World Cup quarter-finals.

Most recently he was coach to Newell's Old Boys last autumn when they signed Diego Maradona, only to be dismissed at Christmas as they battled to avoid relegation.

CHARLIE CHARTERIS

TANDEM TEAMS

MYANMAR, formerly a power in Asian football, hope to be back in that position before too long.

Federation boss U Ting Aung, a former top goalkeeper, said: "We are trying very hard to earn international recognition again. We used to be one of the best teams in Asia, but lost our footing because of political problems."

Myanmar, formerly Burma, took the silver medal in last year's South East Asian Games, and are running two teams as part of their development — one for the next World Cup qualifying tournament and one for the 1996 Olympics.

● **THE draw for the Asian Football Confederation's two major tournaments this year will be televised, for the first time. This is part of an attempt to stimulate more interest in the events, the Asian Club Championship and the Cup-winners Cup.**

● **DENMARK won the annual Carlsberg Cup in Hong Kong, against opposition from the United States, Romania and the hosts. But Hong Kong had to decline an offer to tour the US, because of domestic commitments.**

CHINA

Ten-year plan with tons of problems

THE Chinese Football Association have produced a ten-year plan aimed at establishing the country as a soccer power.

Failure to qualify for the World Cup, and the J.League's progress in Japan, have caused controversy, and the plan is aimed at helping leading clubs to become major forces, as well as taking the country further up the international ladder. The CFA are now committed to helping professionalism to spread, and hope to encourage local enterprises to help clubs.

The document reveals plans for four types of club. They are those run entirely by local sports committees, under local government authority; those run jointly by local authority and private enterprise; those run by private enterprise with local government as a junior partner; and those run entirely by non-government sources. At present, Chinese players are all employed by local government, playing for fixed wages which usually are based on length of service.

The so-called professional set-up which came into being last year was not like that in western nations, but was run by the state, which owned all clubs. Now the CFA plan will "liberate" players — if they generate the necessary sponsorship.

Under the new regulations, the home club will take 60 per cent of the income from a match, with 28 per cent going on expenses (hire of stadium and police, etc), seven per cent (with a £500 minimum) to the CFA, and five per cent (minimum £300) to the local FA. Visiting clubs will get nothing. The fact that all matches must produce at least £800 before players earn anything is worrying clubs, and with good reason. Liaoning, the champions, had gate receipts of less than £5 for one match last season!

The new regulations also stipulate that all clubs must register 24 players by March 25, and no transfers will be permitted once the 22-match season (April 17 — November 13) has started.

Travel is a huge problem. Few clubs can afford plane tickets, and the players face enormous train journeys, up to 60 hours in some cases.

ZHENG MING

In the honours, in the money

THE J.League's first season belonged to Verdy Yomiuri. They won the first championship, the J.League Yamazaki Nabisco Cup for the second time and, while the seniors were taking a rest, the reserves went within a whisker of winning the Asian Club Championship.

None of this was a surprise. Verdy, in their previous incarnation as Yomiuri, did the double in the final season of the former Japan soccer League.

They were the first Japanese team to turn fully professional back in the mid-1980s, and have the most talked-about players in Japan.

Other teams spent a small fortune on foreign stars such as Gary Lineker, Pierre Littbarski and Ramon Diaz. Verdy won because they have always paid top money for Japanese players.

That, combined with a forward-thinking youth policy and a reputation for flair, has brought the club not only the best players but also strength in depth.

When shopping overseas, Verdy tend to be more careful with their money. Bismarck is their biggest foreign star to date, and even he is not paid Lineker's or Littbarski's wages.

Yomiuri were not a traditional powerhouse of Japanese football. The team joined the Japan Soccer League in 1972 as founding members of the new Second Division, finishing seventh out of 10.

They won the championship in 1974, but not promotion, after losing the play-off with Toyota.

Yomiuri then lost to NKK in the promotion play-offs of 1975, and to Shinnitetsu in 1976. They finally made it in 1977, when the Second Division championship was followed by a 4-0 aggregate victory over Toyota, and promotion.

The club finished an encouraging fourth in 1978, but had to wait until 1983 before winning the title.

MIKE PLASTOW

VERDY YOMIURI

Major honours

J.League Suntory Championship: 1993
J.League Nicos Series *(2nd Stage)*: 1993
J.League Yamazaki Nabisco Cup: 1992, 1993
Japan Soccer League Division 1: 1983, 1984, 1987, 1991, 1992
Japan Soccer League Division 2: 1974, 1977
Japan Soccer League Cup: 1979, 1985, 1991
Emperor's Cup: 1984, 1986, 1987
Asian Club Championship: 1987

TOP ANNUAL SALARIES (IN £ STERLING) FOR JAPANESE PLAYERS IN 1994.

	Team	Annual salary
Kazuyoshi MIURA	Verdy	£1,370,000
Ruy RAMOS	Verdy	£1,000,000
Tetsuji HASHIRATANI	Verdy	£700,000
Nobuhiro TAKEDA	Verdy	£700,000
Tsuyoshi KITAZAWA	Verdy	£625,000
Hisashi KATO	Shimizu	£625,000
Takumi HORIIKE	Shimizu	£560,000
Masashi NAKAYAMA	Jubilo	£550,000
Masami IHARA	Marinos	£520,000

TOP 1994 ANNUAL SALARIES FOR FOREIGN PLAYERS IN JAPAN

Gary LINEKER	Grampus	£1,875,000
Pierre LITTBARSKI	JEF	£1,560,000
ZICO	Antlers	£1,250,000
Ramon DIAZ	Marinos	£1,125,000
EDU	Flugels	£625,000
JORGINHO	Grampus	£250,000

BAHRAIN

ONLY four points separated the top five clubs in the Bahrain League's top division, after 12 matches.

The bottom club, almost certainly Al Malkiya, will be relegated, along with either the eighth or ninth teams, who will play off.

The two places will be filled by the top two clubs emerging from play-offs between the leading three in both sections of the First Division.

BAHRAIN — Mumtaz

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Wehda	12	8	2	2	25	8	18
Al Muharraq	12	6	5	1	17	7	17
East Riffa	12	7	2	3	24	12	16
Al Ahli	12	5	6	1	12	7	16
Al Bahrain	12	5	4	3	17	12	14
West Riffa	12	3	4	5	12	12	10
Al Manama	12	4	2	6	13	22	10
Jidhafs	12	2	4	6	6	19	8
Al Qadisiya	12	2	3	7	15	28	7
Al Malkiya	12	1	2	9	6	20	4

FIRST — Section A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Itihad	13	5	6	2	23	14	16
Al Busiteen	13	5	6	2	19	10	16
Isa Town	13	5	4	4	18	15	14
Al Hidd	13	4	3	6	15	18	11
Galai	13	2	7	4	11	20	11
Al Arabi	13	3	4	6	14	23	10

FIRST — Section B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Budaiya	13	5	7	1	24	10	17
Al Hala	13	7	3	3	29	18	17
Sitrah	13	6	3	4	23	21	15
Ras Al Romman	13	3	7	3	15	24	13
Sanabis	13	4	4	5	16	19	12
Al Khaleej	13	9	4	9	6	21	4

UAE

AL AIN of Abu Dhabi were the early pace-setters in the Super League set up in the United Arab Emirates.

They had taken nine points from their first five games, to lead by three.

Three others clubs from Abu Dhabi are members of the league, sponsored by Nashreq Bank — Al Wahda, Bani Yas and Al Jazeira.

There are four from Dubai (Al Ahli, Al Nasr, Al Wasl and Al Shabab), plus Sharjah and Al Shaab from Sharjah.

UAE — Super League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Ain	5	4	1	0	12	2	9
Al Ahli	5	2	2	1	6	3	6
Sharjah	4	2	2	0	5	2	6
Al Wahda	5	2	2	1	4	5	6
Al Nasr	4	2	1	1	6	4	5
Al Wasl	4	1	3	0	4	3	5
Al Shabab	5	1	3	1	6	8	5
Al Shaab	5	0	2	3	5	9	2
Bani Yas	4	0	1	3	0	5	1
Al Jazeira	5	0	1	4	1	8	1

AIDAN PAYNE

INDIA

TWO GOALS by Nigerian striker Christopher gave Mohun Bagan an historic win in the DCM tournament in New Delhi.

Their victory over visiting Varteks of Croatia was the first by an Indian club over European opposition since 1949, and came after Varteks had scored 14 goals in their two previous matches.

Midfielder Satyajit Chatterjee was named man of the match, but could not inspire his team to further success.

Mohun Bagan lost 2-0 in the semi-final to JCT Mills, who in turn fell to Varteks in the final. Two goals in the first nine minutes virtually decided the outcome, and the Croatians added a third before half-time.

East Bengal, Mohemmedan SC, PSEB and Air India were the other teams involved in the invitation tournament.

G. C. DAS

INDONESIA

AMATEURS and semi-professionals may be playing the same competition before too long.

The Indonesian Football Association (PSSI) are considering merging both types of player, because the semi-pro Galatama competition is poorly supported, whereas games in the amateur Premier Division frequently draw big crowds.

This is because of long-established regional and provincial fanaticism, which has not been repeated in the Galatma, even though the standard of play there usually is higher.

A semi-pro club, Gelora Dewata of Denpasar, surprisingly won the League Cup by defeating Mitra Surabaya 1-0.

PSSI sent an under-18 team to Italy to gain experience by playing in a 12-team amateur competition. So far the Indonesians have won two, drawn four and lost nine, scoring 10 goals and conceding 30.

J. F. TAMAELA

● **FORMER Cameroon manager Claude Le Roy, 45, has signed a two-year contract to manage the Malaysian squad. He will be paid almost £4,000 a month. Le Roy played with Rouen, Laval and Ajaccio before turning to coaching.**

● **THE newly-formed South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) will introduce a new tournament in November, to be staged at two-year intervals. The tournament will be called the SAARC (South Asian Assoc-iation of Regional Co-operation) Gold Cup. Hafizuddin Ahmed of Bangladesh has been elected president of SAFF, with P. P. Laxmanan (India) as senior vice-president, and Salman Butt (Pakistan) and Hamid Glafur (Maldives) as vice-presidents.**

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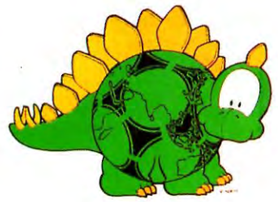

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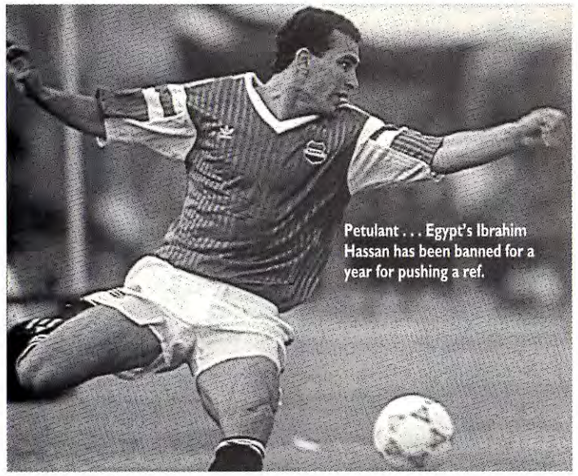

Petulant . . . Egypt's Ibrahim Hassan has been banned for a year for pushing a ref.

Champions will not defend title

DEFENDING champions Al Ahly of Egypt are out of the African Cup-winners Cup, because of a suspension imposed on international defender Ibrahim Hassan.

He has been banned from the game for a year for shoving referee Petrus Mathebela after Al Ahly's 1-0 defeat in the African Super Cup in January.

The Confederation of African Football imposed the minimum fine based on the referee's report, as well as verbal reports from several executive committee members.

Hassan also had to be restrained by CAF secretary-general, Mustapha Fahmy, before the award ceremony that followed the match.

Al Ahly's English coach Allan Harris, the former Chelsea player, and another official, Tarik Suliman, were cautioned.

Now Al Ahly have pulled out of the Cup competition, officially for financial reasons. Given the fact that they are among Africa's richest clubs, it is a hollow excuse.

All three of the African club competitions have been beset by withdrawals and suspensions, leaving the fields the weakest they have been for years.

Clubs from Ivory Coast and Ghana were suspended in December following riots in Abidjan which cost the lives of more than 20 people. Most were Ghanaians attacked by supporters of ASEC Abidjan, the Ivorian club knocked out of the African Champions Cup by Asante Kotoko of Ghana last year.

Ugandan club sides were expelled ahead of the start of this year's tournaments for failure to pay outstanding dues to CAF, and a lack of finance was responsible for the withdrawal of clubs from Benin, Madagascar, Mauritania, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The weakened field in the Cup-winners Cup gives new hope for a host of clubs, led by former winners BCC Lions of Nigeria and Canon Yaounde of Cameroon.

Egypt's Zamalek remain the favourites in the Champions Cup, while Bendel Insurance of Nigeria look the best bet for the CAF Cup.

MARK GLEESON

CENTRAL AFRICA

GABON

MBILINGA have created African history with a 13-0 win over Renaissance of Chad in an African Cup-winners Cup first round, first leg tie in Libreville — a new goalscoring record for African club tournaments.

The Gabonese club, whose goalkeeper added the 11th goal from the penalty spot, surpassed the 12-1 win that Pamba of Tanzania scored over Seychelles' Anse Boileau in the Cup-winners Cup in 1990.

Mbilinga led 9-0 at half-time with three players, including national team midfielder Valery Ondo, scoring a hat-trick.

SOUTH AFRICA

Tribunal shock for FA

THE South African FA were shocked by the findings of the NSL's independent tribunal looking into the "foreign player registration" scandal.

Chatsworth Rangers, kicked out of the Bob Save FA Cup Final for using an ineligible player, were found not guilty, along with Bloemfontein Celtic and QwaQwa Stars.

Yet relegated Jomo Cosmos were fined R3,000 for exceeding their import quota, and D'Alberton Callies had to pay R2,000 for the improper registration of a Ghanaian, Richard Padmore.

These verdicts completely reversed the SAFA inquiry commission recommendation of fines and/or points deductions, against Rangers, Celtic and Stars. Appeals are expected.

Chiefs have signed a prolific scorer, Nicky Shaw, from Dynamos, plus Zambian international Wedson Nyirenda, and Zimbabwian, Mike Maringa.

Hellenic have recruited two English players, former Watford winger Nigel Callaghan (right), now 31, and Glen Knight, a goalkeeper from Millwall.

Cape Town Spurs now have Mich D'Avray in charge, after his successful first stint of management at Moroka Swallows last season.

Amazulu have striker Richard Farrar replacing George Dearnaley, while he is having trials in England, with Leeds. Farrar is back from university in the US.

French-born coach Philippe Troussier got off to a winning start with Kaizer Chiefs in the traditional season opener, the Iwisa Charity Spectacular Tournament.

The four participating clubs are elected by public telephone ballot and play in front of crowds up to 110,000 in Johannesburg's FNB Soccer City Stadium.

The tournament started on a controversial note, with vote-rigging alleged by NSL champions Mamelodi Sundowns, following their exclusion.

More than R1 million was raised for various charities.

IWISA CHARITY SPECTACULAR TOURNAMENT

Semi-finals: Kaizer Chiefs 1 Moroka Swallows 1 *(3-2 on pens)*, Orlando Pirates 1 Amazulu 1 *(3-2 on pens)*. ***Final:*** *Kaizer Chiefs 1 Orlando 1 (5-4 on pens).*

NORTH AFRICA

CAMEROON

CANON YAOUNDE, recovering from several poor seasons, are the early leaders by a point over Panthere de Bangangte.

Tonnerre Yaounde, where Roger Milla is making his comeback, are third. Milla, now 42, scored the winner on his debut, against Canon, and then got the only goal a week later as Tonnerre beat Ocean.

ALGERIA

US CHAOUIA, runners-up last season, are top as the current campaign nears the halfway mark.

They have a three point lead over JS Bordj-Menaiel, AS Ain-M'lila, and NA Hussein-Dey.

TUNISIA

THE national team came back from conceding an early penalty to hold the French "A" team to a 1-1 draw in Tunis.

Mohammed Ali Mahioubi, the former Bundesliga player with Eintracht Braunschweig, scored a second-half equaliser after Monaco's Gnako had given the French a fourth-minute lead from the penalty spot.

● TUNISIAN captain Nabil Maaloul, injured during a match in Saudi Arabia, is expected to miss the African Nations Cup finals in Tunisia, Tunisian newspapers have announced.

Maaloul, who plays for Saudi side Al Ahly, has been ordered to rest for about six months.

WEST AFRICA

NIGERIA

NIGERIA'S World Cup squad have cancelled a planned tour of northern Argentina. Sami Toro, secretary-general of the Nigerian Football Association, said the trip was cancelled after the tour organisers had failed to meet terms of agreement.

The squad, who were to play Argentinian provincial sides, were scheduled to leave Lagos for Argentina on a Friday night but by the Wednesday they still had not received their flight tickets.

Top again

Madjer takes over

RABAH MADJER is the greatest player Algerian football ever had, and now seems to be the man of all hopes for Algeria's supporters.

The former hero of FC Porto in the 1987 Champions Cup final and the captain who led Algeria to victory during the 1980 African Nations Cup is now national coach of Algeria.

Madjer knows how big that responsibility is and how far away the Algerian squad is from top continental level. He talked to ***Redouane Bendali.***

WS: *You often said that you wanted to be a national coach. Can we say that your dream has turned into reality?*

RM: It was much more than a dream — an object I put in my brain when I was a young player. I love football too much to live away from it, so when I decided to stop playing the only way to stay in touch with football affairs was to coach. And when the president of the Algerian Federation proposed me as the national coach I could not refuse such an opportunity.

WS: *Don't you worry about the job you have to do, to lead the Algerian squad to the top level?*

RM: Why should I worry? Algerian football is wealthy enough to reach the level it was before. We have very good players such as Tasfaout, Dziri, Amrouche, Zerrouki . . . to name but a few. We also have the means to build a great squad for the next official events.

WS: *Former national coaches were against calling up professionals. Will you drive the squad in the same way?*

RM: Certainly not. Although I respect the choice of former coaches Ighil and Mehdaoui, I must say that I have a vision of football completely different from them. I'll call every professional who can bring something more to the team. We have some good professional players abroad.

Confident . . . Algeria's new coach Rabah Madjer.

WS: *Who are these professionals?*

RM: "We have Saib, Bouafia and Ferhaoui, top-level players in France, also Megharia in Morocco and Menad in Saudi Arabia. It's a pity such good players were not called up for World Cup qualifying matches. They might have been able to lead Algeria to US '94. We also have many unknown players in Europe and so we must open the doors of the international squad, as Nigeria, Ghana and other African countries do.

WS: *How long do you think you'll stay national coach of Algeria?*

RM: It is impossible to answer that. Normally, I should stay at least until 1998, since I have to ensure Algeria qualify for the 1996 African Nations Cup finals and the 1988 World Cup finals. But in Africa a national coach never knows how long he is going to stay. Even if you have a four-year contract, you can be fired after losing a friendly. I knew this before I agreed this responsibility and I have prepared myself for such a situation.

EAST AFRICA

Cup leads to conflict

SUDAN's El Merreikh, semi-finalists in the African Cup-winners Cup two years ago, controversially won the East and Central African Club Challenge Cup on home territory.

They were lucky not to be thrown out by the organisers, the Confederation of East and Central African Football Associations, after supporters stoned players from Tanzania's Simba FC during an earlier group match.

The Sudanese were losing 2-1 with two minutes to go when the referee had to abandon the match as the missiles rained down.

With five players injured, Simba refused to take part in the replay, so El Merreikh went through to the semi-final. Sudan's El Hilal pulled out of the clash with their local rivals in protest, leaving El Merreikh to beat the late replacements, Shanigani from Zanzibar, by the only goal.

The CECAFA organisers came in for further criticism for switching both semi-final and final to El Merreihk's volatile Khartoum stadium.

In a bad-tempered final, Ugandan champions Express grimly held on in the face of a Sudanese onslaught but eventually lost 2-1, so El Merreikh were highly-unsatisfactory winners in the 21st edition of the event.

Fatah El Rahman Farag scored both goals in the final, but he and Express defender Abdul Nsubuga were sent off midway through the second half, after a fight.

EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICAN CLUB CHALLENGE CUP

Group A: Al Merreikh (Sud) 1 Gor Mahia (Ken) 1; Express (Uga) 2 Simba (Tan) 1; Al Merreikh 2 Express 1; Simba 2 Gor Mahia 0; Express 1 Gor Mahia 0; Al Merreikh 1 Simba 2 *(abandoned 87 mins, Simba withdrew).*

Group B: Al Hilal (Sud) 1 Shanigani (Zan) 0; Young Africans (Tan) 0 Electric (Eth) 0; Young Africans 2 Shanigani 0; Al Hilal 0 Electric 0; Al Hilal 1 Young Africans 1; Electric 0 Shanigani 2.

Semi-finals: Al Merreikh *walkover* v Al Hilal; Al Merreikh 1 Shanigani 0; Express 0 Young Africans 0 *(Express won 5-4 on pens).*

Final: Al Merreikh 2 Express 1.

PHIL MINSHULL

AFRICAN CUPS

1994 AFRICAN CHAMPIONS CUP

Preliminary round

St Pierroise (Rl) v Mbabane Swallows (Swa) 4-0 2-2
St Pierroise won 6-2 on agg
Lobatse Gunners (Bot) v Chief Santos (Nam) 2-0 3-3
Gunners won 5-3 on agg
EELPA (Eth) v Kivoyu Sport (Rwa) 3-2 2-2
Electric won 5-4 on agg
AS Sonader (M'tania) v Academica do Sal (CVI) ...2-0 0-0
Sonader won 2-0 on agg
Postel 2000 (Chad) v Tempete Mocaf (CAR) 0-1 0-2
Tempete Mocaf won 3-0 on agg
Mighty Barolle (Lib) w/drew v Semassi de Sokode (Togo) w/o

First round

Costa do Sol (Moz) v St Pierroise
Nkana (Zam) w/o v Highlanders (Zim).....withdrew
Vita Club (Zai) v Lobatse Gunners
Arsenal (Les) v Mamelodi Sundowns (SA)
Gor Mahia (Ken) v EELPA
Zamalek (Egy, holders) v Express (Uga)
El Merreikh (Sud) v Simba (Tan)
Fire Brigade (Mauritius) v BTM (Mad)
Mouloudia d'Oran (Alg) v AS Sonader
Kaloum Stars (Gui) v Tempete Mocaf
East End Lions (SL) v Stade Malien (Mali)
Esperance (Tun) v Etoile Filante (BF)
Wydad Casablanca (Mor) v Semassi de Sokode
Petro Atletico (Ang) v AS Sogara (Gab)
Iwuanyanwu Nationale (Nig) v Zumunta (Niger)
Racing Bafoussam (Cam).....bye

Second round

Costa do Sol/St Pierroise v Nkana
Vita Club/Lobatse Gunners v Arsenal/Mamelodi Sundowns
Gor Mahia/Kivoyu Sport v Zamalek/Express
El Merreikh/Simba v Fire Brigade/BTMMouloudia d'Oran/AS Sonader v Kaloum Stars/Tempete Mocaf
East End Lions/Stade Malien v Esperance/Etoile Filante
Wydad/Semassi de Sokode v Petro Atletico/AS Sogara
Iwuanyanwu Nationale/Zumunta v Racing Bafoussam

1994 AFRICAN CUP WINNERS' CUP

Preliminary round

Black Africa (Nam) withdrew v Bantu (Les).....w/o
AS Cimelta (Mad) withdrew v Stade Tamponnaise (Rl)..w/o
11 Men in Flight (Swa) v Township Rollers (Bot).....3-1 *post*

First round

St George (Eth) v Al Ahly (Egy, holders)
Olympic de Beja (Tun) v Sahel SC (Niger)
Witbank Aces (SA) v Bantu
Tanganda (Zim) withdrew v Stade Tamponnaise.....w/o
Kenya Breweries (Ken) v Ferroviario Beira (Moz)
El Hilal (Sud) v Rayon Sport (Rwa)
Malindi (Tan) v Kampala City Council (Uga)
Power Dyn (Zam) withdrew v 11 Men in Flight/Township R
BCC Lions (Nig) v Fonctionnaires de Bobo (BF)
Djoliba (Mali) v NA Hussein-Dey (Alg)
Hafia (Gui) v Agaza Omnisport (Togo)
Canon Yaounde (Cam) v AS Aviacao (Ang)
DC Motema Pembe (Zai) v Anges de Fatima (CAR)
Postel (Ben) v Mighty Blackpool (SL)
Mbilinga (Gab) v Renaissance (Chad)
LPRC Oilers (Lib) v AS Snim (Mauritania)

Second round

St George/Ahl Ahly v Olympic Beja/Sahel SC
Witbank Aces/Bantu v Stade Tamponnaise
Kenya Breweries/Ferroviario Beira v El Hilal/Rayon Sport
Malindi/Kampala CC v 11 Men in Flight/Township Rollers
BCC Lions/F. de Bobo v Djoliba/NA Hussein-Dey
Hafia/Agaza Omnisport v Canon Yaounde/AS Aviacao
DC Motema Pembe/Anges de Fatima v Postel/M. Blackpool
Mbilinga/Renaissance v LPRC Oilers/AS Snim

1994 CAF CUP

Preliminary round

Linare (Les) v St Denis (Rl) 0-1 0-2
St Denis won 3-0 on agg
Boavista de Praia (CVI) v Diamond Stars (SL) 3-1 1-4
Diamond Stars won 5-4 on agg

First round

Nakivubo Villa (Uga) v AFC Leopards (Ken)
Moneni Pirates (Swa) w/o v Caps Utd (Zim).....withdrew
Gaborone Utd (Bot) v Ferroviario de Maputo (Moz)
St Denis w/o v Roan Utd (Zam).....withdrew
Coffee Marketing (Eth) v El Mourada (Sud)
Racing Club (BF) v US Chaouia (Alg)
Elecsport (Chad) v Olympic (Niger)
Garde Nationale (Mauritania) v JS Kabylie (Alg)
AS Nianan de Koulikoro (Mali) v Delta FC (Gab)
Kamsar (Gui) v Diamond Stars
Gomido de Kpalime (Togo) v Unisport Bafang (Cam)
Stade Centrafricain (CAR) v Bendel Insurance (Nig)
Mogas '90 (Ben) v Fulani (Lib)
Young Ones (Nam) withdrew v Primiero de Maio (Ang)....w/o
AS Bantous (Zai) v Mukura Victory (Rwa)

Second round

Navivubo Villa/AFC Leopards v Moneni Pirates
Gaborone United/Ferroviario de Maputo v St Denis
Y. Africans/Moroka Swallows v Coffee M'ting/El Mourada
Racing Club/US Chaouia v Elecsport/Olympic
Garde Nat/JS Kabylie v AS Nianan de Kouikoro/Delta FC
Kamsar/Diamond v Gomido de Kpalime/Unisport Bafang
Stade Centrafricain/Bendel Insurance v Mogas '90/Fylani
Primiero de Maio v AS Bantous/Mukura Victory

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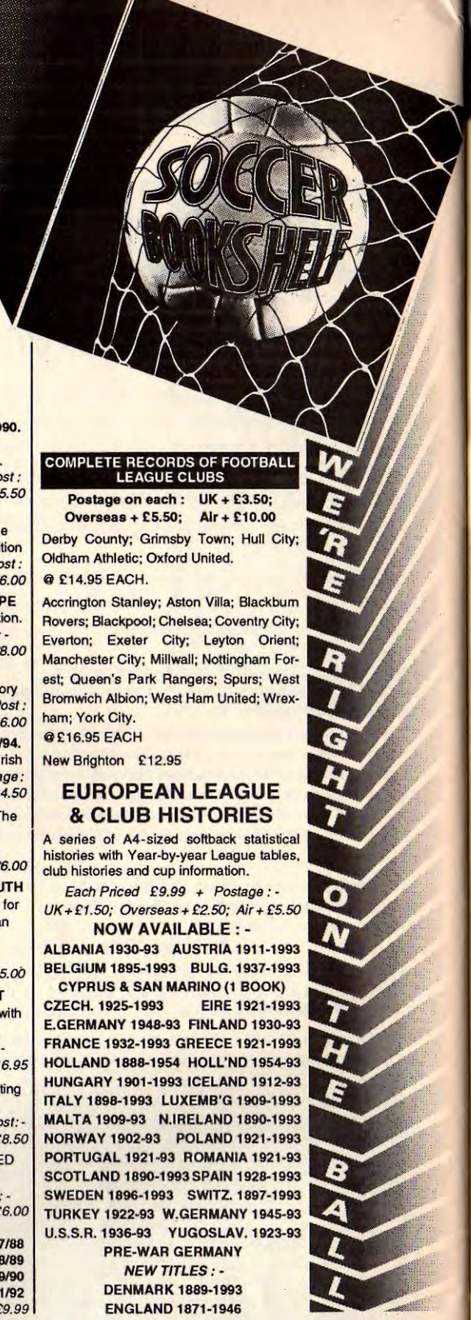

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RESULTS

PSV Eindhoven beat Ajax 4-1 . . . Benfica beat FC Porto 2-0 . . .

EUROPE

BELGIUM

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, JANUARY 23

WEEKEND

GENT 4 (Van den Bergh 6, Van der Linden 26, Viscal 57, Booy 88)
LIEGE 1 (Godfroid 82). **Att:** 6,000.

CERCLE BRUGES 2 (Weber 66, Munteanu 67)
WAREGEM 1 (Krugen 76). **Att:** 3,000.

CHARLEROI 2 (Gerard 21,Malbasa 45)
BEVEREN 1 (Wolakerick 51). **Att:** 8,000.

STANDARD 2 (Leonard 28, Cruz 32 pen)
MECHELEN 2 (Urban 49, Van Gompel 57). **Att:** 12,000.

LIERSE 1 (Snelders 78)
RWDM 1 (Williams 34). **Att:** 5,000.

LOMMEL 1 (Vandervee10)
GENK 1 (Schaessens 27). **Att:** 8,000.

ANDERLECHT 0
SERAING 2 (Wamberto 3, Lukaku 81). Att: 12,000.

EKEREN 0
CLUB BRUGGE 1 (Amokachi 36). Att: 7,500.

OOSTENDE 2 (Swiekek 24, De Waele 42)
ANTWERP 4 (Segers 31, Kiekens 45, Porte 66, Lehnhoff 90). **Att:** 5,500.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

WEEKEND

GENK 0
ANDERLECHT 2 (Nilis 66, 86). Att: 8,500.

SERAING 3 (Wamberto 34, Edmilson 64, 66)
GENT 0. Att: 5,000.

LIEGE 2 (Godfroid 44, Arnold 88)
CERCLE BRUGES 1 (Weber 16). Att: 7,800.

WAREGEM 1 (Christianes 57)
ANTWERP 2 (Porte 36, Claesens 89). Att: 6,000.

CLUB BRUGGE 2 (Staelens 53, Van der Meyden 76)
CHARLEROI 1 (Misse-Misse 45). Att: 9,000.

MECHELEN 0
LIERSE 0. Att: 6,500.

EKEREN 1 (Buila 83)
OOSTENDE 2 (Janik 36, Pingon 66). At: 3,000.

RWDM 0
LOMMEL 0. Att: 3,000.

BEVEREN 0
STANDARD 2 (Bisconti 56, Goossens 88). Att: 4,500.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6

WEEKEND

GENT 2 (Verdegem 33, Viscacil 67)
GENK 3 (Claessens 29, Goots 50, 57). Att: 5,000.

CERCLE BRUGES 1 (Saenens 7)
SERAING1 (Edmilson 27). At: 3,000.

CHARLEROI 0
EKEREN 0. Att: 12,000.

STANDARD 0
CLUB BRUGGE 0. At: 17,000.

LIERSE 1 (Rekdal 27)
BEVEREN 0. Att: 6,000.

LOMMEL 3 (Van Geneugden 22, 58, Vanaken 65)
MECHELEN 0. Att: 8,000.

ANDERLECHT 0
RWDM 0. Att: 18,000.

ANTWERP 1 (Claessen 19)
LIEGE 1 (Selwe 15). **Att:** 5,000.

OOSTENDE 1 (De Walle 67)
WAREGEM 1 (Atteveld 34). **Att:** 7,000.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13

WEEKEND

CHARLEROI 2 (Misse-Misse 68, Brugno 79)
OOSTENDE 1 (Sultek 8). **Att:** 9,000.

GENK 2 (Claesen 34, Goots 89)
CERCLE BRUGES 2 (Lauwers 2, Weber 9). **Att:** 3,000.

SERAING 4 (Lukaku 35, Karagiaris 72, Teppers 82, Edmilson 83)
ANTWERP 2 (Kiekens 68, Lehnhoff 86). **Att:** 10,000.

LIEGE 1 (Arnold 37)
WAREGEM 0. **Att:** 13,000.

CLUB BRUGGE 1 (Amokachi 78)
LIERSE 0. **Att:** 9,000.

MECHELEN 1 (Arambasic 31)
ANDERLECHT 0. **Att:** 12,000.

EKEREN 1 (Hofmans 30)
STANDARD 1 (Visconti 55). **Att:** 6,000.

RWDM2 (Williams 57, Wuyts 71)
GENT 0. **Att:** 2,500.

BEVEREN 2 (Van Ovetvelt 3, Ludovic 20)
LOMMEL 1 (Petters 35). **Att:** 5,000.

HOLLAND

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, JANUARY 23

WEEKEND

SPARTA v AJAX — *postponed*
VITESSE v WILLEM II — *postponed*
RODA JC v GRONINGEN — *postponed*
RKC v MVV — *postponed*
PSV 1 (Kieft 6)
HEERENVEEN 1 (Regtop 85). Att: 27,900.
UTRECHT v GA EAGLES — *postponed*
CAMBUUR 3 (De Ger 15, Meijer 45, Haatrecht 67 pen)
VOLENDAM 1 (L. Steur 6). **Att:** 5,000.
TWENTE v FEYENOORD — *postponed*
VVV 1 (Polman 72)
NAC BREDA 1 (Van Hooijdonk 45). Att: 6,220.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

MIDWEEK

MVV 2
GRONINGEN 0

WEEKEND

WILLEM II 1 (Sylla 75)
PSV 1 (Numan 57). **Att:** 13,250.

MVV 0
SPARTA 0. **Att:** 4,232.

HEERENVEEN 1 (Tammer 18)
UTRECHT 0. **Att:** 8,700.

GA EAGLES 3 (Gosvelt 6, Kamperberg 14, Schenning 35)
RODA JC 1 (Van Der Luer 28). Att:4,323.

NAC BREDA 2 (Remie 24, V an Hooijdonk 70)
TWENTE 1 (Polley 4). **Att:** 9,876.

AJAX 3 (Litmanen 19, 88, Petterson 66)
VITESSE 1 (Loeffen 6). **Att:** 19,159.

GRONINGEN 2 (Haming 76, Roosien 89)
CAMBUUR 2 (Mekela 25, 56). Att: 9,100.

VOLENDAM 1 (Pastoor 64)
VVV 1 (Graef 63). **Att:** 5,700.

FEYENOORD 1 (Scholten 66)
RKC 1 (Branos 52). **Att:** 21,459.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6

MIDWEEK

RKC 0
AJAX 3 (Rijkaard 39, Oulida 58, Overmars 61). **Att:** 6,000.

RODA JC 1 (Van De Luer 41)
NAC BREDA 2 (Lammers 20, Van Hooijdonk 22). **Att:** 4,780.

WEEKEND

VITESSE 1 (Gillhaus 20)
MVV 3 (Hofman 24, Scheepers 35, 75). Att: 5,409.

RODA JC 1 (Berts 75)
HEERENVEEN 1 (Tammer 88). Att: 4,000.

RKC 3 (Boogers 40, Van Den Berg 60, Van Herpen 75)
SPARTA 1 (Decheiver 65). **Att:** 1,750.

PSV 4 (Numan 12, Lamptey 25, 49, Kieft 30)
AJAX 1 (Overmars 90). **Att:** 38,000.

UTRECHT 1 (De Kock 42)
WILLEM II 1 (Stewart 53). **Att:** 4,500.

FEYENOORD 1 (Kilrich 27)
NAC BREDA 1 (Van Hooydonk 67). Att: 31,000.

CAMBUUR 1 (De Gier 44)
GA EAGLES 0. **Att:** 6,000.

TWENTE 2 (Polley 24, Van Halst 56)
VOLENDAM 0. **Att:** 4,300.

VVV 1 (Graef 56)
GRONINGEN 3 (Roossien 26, 40, Reiziger 79). **Att:** 4,450.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13

MIDWEEK

VITESSE 0
WILLEM II 0

VOLENDAM 2 (Vukov 59, Stefanovich 78)
RODA JC 0

SPARTA 0
AJAX 1 (F. De Boer 57)

UTRECHT 2 (Graanoogst 2, Vierklau 24)
GA EAGLES 0

WEEKEND

DUTCH CUP — QUARTER-FINALS

AJAX 7 (Davids 8, Blind 40, De Boor 44, Petersen 5, Litmanen 60, 71, Van Vossen 74)
HELMOND SPORT 1 (Ton 89). **Att:** 13,000.

DEN HAAG 3 (Hoekman 77, 88, Van Der Paan 78)
NEC NIJMEGEN 1 (Van Wonderen 7). **Att:** 4,500.

RKC 2 (Decheiver 4, Van Rigswick 25)
FEYENOORD 4 (Kiprich 16, Witschge 53, 68, Taument 80). **Att:** 6,000.

NAC BREDA 1 (Van Hooijdonk 94)
PSV EINDHOVEN 0. **Att:** 11,500.

PORTUGAL

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, JANUARY 23

WEEKEND

ESTORIL 0
FARENSE 1 (Hugo 30). **Att:** 6,000.

BEIRA-MAR 0
FC PORTO 2 (Semedo 61, Kostadinov 82). **Att:** 6,000.

BENFICA 3 (Rui Bento 10 og, Alton 28, Joao V, Pinto 78)
BOAVISTA 1 (Tavares 50). **Att:** 80,000.

MARITIMO 2 (Heitor 27 pen, Paulo Alves 35)
GUIMARAES 0. **Att:** 15,000.

FAMALICAO 3 (Garrido 42, Amarildo 57, 84)
GIL VICENTE 0. **Att:** 12,300.

BRAGA 3 (Karoglan 24, 33 pen, Forbs 71)
UNIAO MADEIRA 0. **Att:** 13,800.

PACOS FERREIRA 1 (Xulian 22)
SPORTING 2 (Cadette 41, Balakov 72 pen). **Att:** 13,800.

SALGUEIROS 1 (Sa Pinta 21)
AMADORA 1 (Ricardo 12). **Att:** 10,000.

SETUBAL 3 (Paulo Gomes 30, Chiquinho Conde 35, Yekini 41)
BELENENSES 0. **Att:** 14,000.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

MIDWEEK

SALGUEIROS 1 (Simao 48)
SETUBAL 2 (Chiquinho Conde 7, S. Arauso 81). **Att:** 5,000.

BEIRA-MAR 1 (Punisic 88 pen)
GUIMARAES 0. **Att:** 10,000.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6

BEIRA-MAR 0
ESTORIL 0. **Att:** 8,300.

BENFICA 2 (Ailton 35, Rui Costa 54)
FC PORTO 0. **Att:** 70,000.

MARITIMO 1 (Alek 52)
BOAVISTA 0. **Att:** 10,000.

FAMALICAO 1 (Freitas 13 pen)
GUIMARAES 1 (Zahovic 75). **Att:** 15,000.

SP. BRAGA 4 (Toni 3,46, F. Pires 67, 85)
GIL VICENTE 0. **Att:** 8,800.

PACOS FERREIRA 1 (Bozinoski 87)
UNIAO MADEIRA 1 (Tico 5). **Att:** 5,600.

SALGUEIROS 0
SPORTING 1 (Paulo Torres 37). **Att:** 5,000.

SETUBAL 1 (Yekini 24 pen)
AMADORA 1 (Ricardo 69). **Att:** 4,200.

BELENENSES 4 (Taira 13, L. Gustavo 26, Goncalves 39, Soares 54)
FARENSE 2 (Hassan 68, Hajry 79). **Att:** 4,500.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13

WEEKEND

ESTORIL 0
BENFICA 3 (Ailton 74, 88, Yuran 85). **Att:**10,000.

PORTO 2 (Drulovic 5, 84)
MARITIMO 0. **Att:** 20,000.

BOAVISTA 3 (Nelo 20, Nogueira 78, Luciano 82)
FAMALICAO 0. **Att:** 4,000.

GUIMARAES 0
SP. BRAGA 0. **Att:** 8,000.

GIL VICENTE 1 (Mangonga 43)
PACOS FERREIRA 1 (Joao Batista 19). **Att:** 3,000.

UNIAO MADEIRA 3 (Jokanovic 19, 74, 84)
SALGUEIROS 1 (Sa Pinto 65). **Att:** 3,000.

SPORTING 2 (Cadete 59, Vujacic 88)
SETUBAL 1 (Paulo Gomes 11). **Att:** 15,000.

AMADORA 2 (Fernando 83 pen, 90)
BELENENSES 2 (Mauro Soares 41, Edenilson 68). **Att:** 4,000.

FARENSE 2 (Eliseu 30 og, Serodio 32)
BEIRA-MAR 2 (Miguel Bruno 49, Jorge Soares 64 og). **Att:** 8,769.

INTERNATIONAL

SUNDAY, JANUARY 23

Jan 23 = Bamako — intl friendly
MALI 1
SENEGAL 0
Att: 6,000.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26

Jan 26 = Oakland, Calif — intl friendly
MEXICO 1 (Duran 31)
SWITZERLAND 5 (Subiat 7, 53, Grassi 65, 87, Bonvin 25)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 23,000. **Ref:** Baharmast (US)
Mexico: Chavez — Espana, Suarez, Dios Ramirez — Patino (Herrera 71), Marcelino, Ambriz, Rodriguez, Ramon Ramirez (Del Olmo 57) — Hermosillo, Duran (Garcia Aspe 46).
Switzerland: Pascolo — Hottiger, Herr (Vega 80), Geiger, Quentin (Studer 83) — Ohrel (Sylvestre 85), Bregy (Wyss 66), Bickel, Bonvin (Fournier 75) — Subiat, Grassi.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 28

Jan 28 = Barinos — intl friendly
VENEZUELA 1 (Rodriguez 61)
COLOMBIA 2 (Trellez 8, Valenciano 64)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Rodriguez (Ven)
Venezuela: Barreto (Garcia) — Gonzalez, Tortolero, Martinez (Flores), H Rivas — San Vicente, Miranda,Matrica, Anor (Contreras) — S Rivas, Marquez.
Colombia: Cordova — Herrera, Perea, Mendoza, Perez — Serna (Escobar), Alvarez, Gomez, Valderrama — Valenciano, Trellez (M Asprilla).

SATURDAY, JANUARY 29

Jan 29 = Seattle/Kindgome — intl friendly
UNITED STATES 1 (Lalas 85)
RUSSIA 1 (Radchenko 52)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 43,651. **Ref:** Sawtell (Can)
US: Meola — Armstrong, Lapper, Lalas, Agoos, Burns, Dooley (Quinn 74), Henderson, Jones (Chung 83), Kinnear, Moore (Reyna 60).
Russia: Khapov — Gorlukovich, Galiamin, Popov, D Kuznetsov (Cherishev 74), Tetradze, Tatarchuk (Tadeyev 57), Korneyev (Rashimov 83), Salenko, Borodiuk, Radchenko.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

Jan 30 = Dakar — intl friendly
SENEGAL 0
MALI 0
Att: 4,000.

Jan 30 = Seattle — intl friendly
UNITED STATES 1 (Lalas 85)
RUSSIA 1 (Radchenko 52)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 43,651. **Ref:** Sawtell (Can)
US: Meola — Armstrong, Lapper, Lalas, Agoos — Burns, Dooley (Quinn 74), Henderson, Jones (Chung 83) — Kinnear, Moore.
Russia: Khapov — Galiamin, Tetradze, Golukovich — D Popov, D Kuznetsov (Cherishev 74), Tatarchuk (Tadeyev 57), Korneyev (Rahimov 83) — Salenko, Borodiuk, Radchenko.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2

Feb 2 = Sharjah, UAE — Sharjah tmt
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES 0
SLOVAKIA 1 (Weiss 47)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 5,000.
UAE: Mousaba — Sallah, Ismail, Al-Hadad, Mir — Naser, Abdelkhalek (Bakhit 46), Hamdun (Matar 64), Galum (Jaher 85) — Al-Taliani, Atik (Azoz 46).
Slovakia: Vencel — Stupala, Moravec, Hipp, Kinder — O Danko, Tomaschek, Hyravy, Weiss — Timko, Faktor (Zvara 75).

Feb 2 = Sharjah, UAE — Sharjah tmt
MOROCCO 1 (Daoudi 44pen)
EGYPT 1 (Hossam Hassan 67pen)
HT: 1-0.

Feb 2 = Oakland, Calif — intl friendly
MEXICO 1 (Garcia Aspe 25pen)
RUSSIA 4 (Borodyuk 4, 45, 55, Radchenko 37)
HT: 1-3. **Att:** 12,000.
Mexico: Campos — Suarez, Ramirez Perales, Ambriz, Ramon Ramirez (Espana) — Bernal, Rodriguez (Patino), Garcia Aspe (Herrera) — Salvador, Del Olmo, Duran.
Russia: Khapov — Gorlukovich, Galiamin, Tetradze — D Popov (Podpaly), D Kuznetsov, Korneyev, Tedeyev (Cherishev) — Borodiuk, Salenko, Radchenko.

Feb 2 = Kuala Lumpur — Dunhill Cup
NORWAY 3 (Petter 11, 49, Undheim 54)
DENMARK 3 (Tengbjerg 78, Pedersen 80, Falch 85)
HT: 1-0.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4

Feb 4 = Sharjah, UAE — Sharjah tmt
EGYPT 1 (Hossam Hassan 75)
SLOVAKIA 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 5,000.
Egypt: Shoubeir — Mansour, Ramzy, Hamza, Youssef (Ashrav 46) — Ibrahim Hassan, Abdelgalil, El Shour, El Bechir (Rayan 60) — El Kas (Chadour 77), Hossan Hassam.
Slovakia: L Molnar — Stupala, Moravec, Hipp, Kinder — Hyravy, Tomaschek,Halatinsky (Obaitnik 61), Solar — Timko, Zvara (Dina 61).

Feb 4 = Sharjah, UAE — Sharjah tmt
UAE 1 (Seif Sultan 70)
MOROCCO 1 (Youssef Fertout 73)
HT: 0-0.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 5

Feb 5 = Kuala Lumpur — Dunhill Cup
NORWAY 3 (Stakkeland 9, T Larsen 64, Flo 73)
JAPAN 2 (Matsubara 48, Takada 90)
HT: 1-0.

Feb 5 = Kuala Lumpur — Dunhill Cup
MALAYSIA 1 (Chong 26)
DENMARK 5 (D Povlsen 19, 23, Pedersen 28, 44, Sommer 72)
HT: 1-4.

CONTINUED PAGE 62

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6

Feb 6 = Jeddah — intl friendly
SAUDI ARABIA 1 (Al-Owairan 55)
COLOMBIA 1 (Valenciano 21)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 20,000.

Feb 6 = Sharjah, UAE — Sharjah tmt
MOROCCO 2 (Fertout 23, El-Hadrioui 87)
SLOVAKIA 1 (Faktor 27)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 8,000.
Morocco: Amzi — Mouidi, El Graoui, Nekroaz, Abdallah (El Hadrioui 46) — Lakhlaj (Fradin 73), Azzouzi, Daoudi, El Ouali (Boublal 60) — Boyyboud, Fertout.
Slovakia: Vencel — Stupala, Vidumsky, Hipp, Solar (Kinder 85) — Weiss, Tomaschek, Obaitnik, O Danko — Faktor (Timko 75), Dina (Malatinsky 65).

Feb 6 = Sharjah, UAE — Sharjah tmt
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES 0
EGYPT 1 (Hossam Hassan 82)
HT: 0-0.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7

Feb 7 = Banjul — intl friendly
GAMBIA 0
SENEGAL 0
Att: 4,000.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8

Feb 8 = Valletta — Malta intl tmt
SLOVENIA 1 (Chelia)
GEORGIA 0

Feb 8 = Valletta — Malta intl tmt
MALTA 1 (S Vella)
TUNISIA 1 (Suujah)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9

Feb 9 = Jeddah — intl friendly
SAUDI ARABIA 0
COLOMBIA 1 (Aristizabal 33)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 15,000.

Feb 9 = Tenerife — intl friendly
SPAIN 1 (Sergi 19)
POLAND 1 (Kosecki 37)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 23,600. **Ref:** Bodenham (Eng)
Spain: Zubizarreta — Sergi, Alkorta, Abelardo, Otero, Hierro (Camarasa 46), Chano, Nadal (Guardiola 46), Salinas (Juanele 46), Fran (Beguiristain 46), Felipe.
Poland: Wozniak — Grembocki, Lapinski, Bak (Staniek 46), Jebor, Lewandowski (Czerwiec 76), Brzeczek, Jalocha (Jaskulski 71), Kuskowiak (Balluszynski 62), Kosecki, Kowalczyk.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10

Feb 10 = Hong Kong — Carlsberg Cup, semi-final
DENMARK 0
UNITED STATES 0
Att: 8,600
Denmark won 4-2 on pens
Denmark: Brodersen — Bruun, Dethlefsen, Ekelund, Fernandez (Moller 88), Hogh, B Jensen, J Kristensen, Krogh, Rieper, Thomsen.
US: Friedel — Lapper, Burns, Dooley (Perez 46), Moore (Quinn 46), Jones (Reyna 86), Lalas, Henderson, Kinnear, Armstrong.

Feb 10 = Valletta — Malta intl tmt
MALTA 0
GEORGIA 1 (Ketsbaia)

Feb 10 = Valletta — Malta intl tmt
SLOVENIA 2 (Jarmanic, Binkovsic)
TUNISIA 2 (Hamrouni, Soussi)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12

Feb 12 = Valletta — Malta intl tmt
GEORGIA 2 (Kizilashvili, Kudunov)
TUNISIA 0

Feb 12 = Valletta — Malta intl tmt
MALTA 0
SLOVENIA 1 (Gliha 54)
● *Slovenia win tournament*

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13

Feb 13 = Hong Kong — Carlsberg Cup, 3rd place play-off
ROMANIA 2 (Dumitrescu 6, 72pen)
UNITED STATES 1 (Balboa 14)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 9,000. **Ref:** Pang Cham Kai (HK)
Romania: Prunea — Kadar, Mihali, Gilca, Grozavu, Zotinca (Stan 89), Dumitrescu (Craioveanu 84), Panduru, Prodan, Papura, Niculescu.
US: Meola — Balboa, Lapper, Armstrong, Lalas, Dooley (Quinn 66), Burns, Henderson, Jones, Perez, Moore (Michallik 51).

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16

Feb 16 = Naples — intl friendly
ITALY 0
FRANCE 1 (Djorkaeff 44)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 17,241. **Ref:** Merk (Ger)
Italy: Pagliuca — Benarrivo, Maldini, Eranio, Cistacurta, Baresi (Minotti 65), Evani, Albertini, Casiraghi (Silenzi 46), R Baggio, Stroppa (Cappioli 65).
France: Lama — Karembeu (Cyprien 73), Di Meco, Roche, Desailly (Martins 89), Le Guen, Cantona, Gnako (Guerin 53), Ginola, Djorkaeff, Deschamps.

Feb 16 = Ta'Qali — intl friendly
MALTA 1 (Busuttil 34)
BELGIUM 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 7,000.

Feb 16 = Seoul — intl friendly
SOUTH KOREA 1 (Shin Hong-gi 19)
ROMANIA 2 (Dumitrescu 43, 73)
HT: 1-1.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Feb 18 = Miami, Joe Robbie — Robbie Cup, 1st rnd
SWEDEN 0
COLOMBIA 0
Att: 15,676. **Ref:** Helder Dias (US)
Sweden: Ravelli — Kamark, Erlingmark, *Bjorklund, Mikael Nilsson, Limpar, Rehn, Jan Jansson (Alexandersson 65), Landberg (Blomqvist 71), Larsson (Lillenberg 75), Andersson (Kindvall 80).
* *Bjorklund sent off, 83min.*
Colombia: Cordoba — Andres Escobar, Mendoza, Herrera, Perez, J G Gomez, *Valderrama, Alvarez, Aristizabal (Serna 46), Trellez, Valenciano (Alexander Escobar 46).
* *Valderrama sent off, 45min.*

Feb 18 = Miami, Joe Robbie — Robbie Cup, 1st rnd
UNITED STATES 1 (Jones 78)
BOLIVIA 1 (Moreno 44)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 15,676. **Ref:** Acala Pineda (Mex)
US: Meola — Balboa, Armstrong (Caligiuri 87), Lapper, Lalas, Quinn (Burns 67), Dooley, Henderson (Reyna 76), Jones, Perez, Moore (Klopas 46).
Bolivia: Trucco — Sandy, Rimba, Quinteros, Arteaga, Melgar, Alvaro Pena (Ramallo 70), Ramos (Castillo 81), Moreno, Cristaldo, Baldivieso.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20

Feb 20 = Miami, Joe Robbie — Robbie Cup, 2nd rnd
COLOMBIA 2 (Miguel Asprilla 29, Perez 77pen)
BOLIVIA 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 20,171. **Ref:** D'Aquila (US)
Colombia: Cordoba — Andres Escobar, Herrera, Perez, Perea, Serna, Alvarez, J G Gomez (Restrepo 64), Alexander Escobar, Miguel Asprilla, Aristizabal (Valenciano 46).
Bolivia: Trucco — Sandy, Rimba, Quinteros, Cristaldo, Borja, Melgar, Ramos (Rueda 79), Rios (Alvaro Pena 46), Ramallo (Moreno 46), Baldivieso (Chavez 57).

Feb 20 = Miami, Joe Robbie — Robbie Cup, 2nd rnd
UNITED STATES 1 (Perez 4)
SWEDEN 3 (Larsson 30, K Andersson 34, Lillenberg 56)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 20,171. **Ref:** Marrufo Mendoza (Mex)
US: Friedel — Balboa (Caligiuri 46), Lapper (Reyna 63), Lalas, Armstrong, Burns, Dooley, Michalik (Quinn 63), Jones, Perez, Moore (Klopas 46).
Sweden: L Eriksson — Kamark, Erlingmark, M Nilsson, Rehn, Jesper Jansson, Alexandersson (Landberg 73), Blomqvist (Limpar 59), Larsson, K Andersson (Kindvall 77), Lillenberg.

Final table

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
SWEDEN	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Colombia	2	1	1	0	2	0	4
Bolivia	2	0	1	1	1	3	1
United States	2	0	1	1	1	4	1

* *Sweden win on goals scored*

Feb 20 = Seoul — intl friendly
SOUTH KOREA 5 (Park Doo Jeoung 2, Shin Mun Seung 2, Park Kook Chang)
MALAYSIA 1
HT: 1-0.

OTHER MATCHES
Jan 30: Mealhada (Por) 0, Estonia 1.
Feb 1 *(Tunis):* Tunisia 1, France B 1.
Feb 4 *(Leytron):* Sion 4, Romania 2.
Feb 6 *(Yverdon):* Yverdon 0, Romania 1.
Feb 10 *(Hong Kong, Carlsberg Cup — semi-final):* Hong Kong Lge XI 1, Romania 1.
HK Lge XI won 5-4 on pens.
Feb 13 *(Hong Kong, Carlsberg Cup — final):* Hong Kong Lge XI 0, Denmark 2 (Kristensen 20, Fernandez 38)
Feb 15 *(Coverciano):* Fiorentina 0, Colombia 0.
Feb 16 *(Jerusalem):* Israel U-21 0, Italy U-21 0.
(Bourges): France U-21 3, Poland U-21 1

SOUTH AMERICA

CONCACAF CLUB CHAMPIONS CUP
Second round, 1st leg

MONDAY, JANUARY 27

In San Salvador, El Salvador
DEPORTIVO ALIANZA (ES) 1 (Melendez pen)
LOS ANGELES SALSA (US) 0
HT: 0-0.
Alianza: Hernandez, Rojas, Sosa, Mayen, La Cruz, Melendez, Lopez, Neyra, Canales, Lozano, Duran.
LA Salsa: Ammann, Lozano, Lee, Reyson, Ipsen, Fernandez, Allmutt, Fox Guerra, Paulinho, Wright.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 29

In San Jose, Costa Rica.
HEREDIANO (CR) 0
OLIMPIA (Hon) 0

CENTRAL AMERICAN GAMES SOCCER TOURNAMENT
(In San Salvador)
Group A
Jan 15: El Salvador 7 Nicaragua 0.
Jan 17: Guatemala 10 Nicaragua 0.
Jan 19: El Salvador 4 Guatemala 0.
Group B
Ja. 15: Costa Rica 4 Belize 0.
Ja. 17: Honduras 9 Belize 0
Jan 19: Honduras 5 Costa Rica 3.

Preliminary round — *final standings*
Group A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
EL SALVADOR	2	2	0	0	11	1	4
Guatemala	2	1	0	0	11	4	2
Nicaragua	2	0	0	2	0	17	0
Group B							
HONDURAS	2	2	0	0	14	3	4
Costa Rica	2	1	0	1	7	5	2
Belize	2	0	0	2	0	13	0

Final: Honduras 2 El Salvador 1.
3rd place: Costa Rica 1 Guatemala 1 *(Costa Rica won on pens)*

MAJOR CLUB INTERNATIONALS
Jan16: Saprissa (CR) 1 Borussia Dortmund (Ger) 1;
Jan 19: Alajuelense (CR) 0 Borussia Dortmund (Ger) 0;
Jan 21: Newell's Old Boys (Arg) 0 Vasco da Gama (Bra) 0;
Jan 26: Newell's Old Boys (Arg) 2 Vasco da Gama (Bra) 2.
Jan .27: Talleres Cordoba (Arg) 1 Olimpia (Par) 1.

EUROPEAN CLUB CUPS

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE
GROUP A *(March 2)*
MONACO 2 (Scifo 36, Djorkaeff 41, Klinsmann 52)
GALATASARAY 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 20,000.
Monaco: Ettori — Blondeau, Petit (Valery 46), Thuram, Grimandi, Puel, Klinsmann, Djorkaeff, Viaud (Gnako 68), Scifo, Ikpeba.
Galatasaray: Hayrettin — Mert Korkmaz, Bulent Korkmaz, Soner (Hamza 58), Goetz, Tugay, Ugur, Yusuf, Hakan, Erdal, Arif (Okan 84).

MOSCOW SPARTAK 2 (Rodionov 77, Karpin 88)
BARCELONA 2 (Stoichkov 10, Romario 66)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 60,000. **Ref:** Puhl (Hun).
Spartak: Stauche — Khlestov, Ivanov, Tsymbalar, Pisarev (Rodionov 46), Nikiforov, Ternavsky, Karpin, Piatnitski, Ledyakhov, V Beschastnykh
Barcelona: Zubizarreta — Ferrer, Nadal, Koeman, Sergi, Bakero (Goikoetxea 73), Ivan, Stoichkov, Amor, Romario, Beguiristain (Eusebio 81).

GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Monaco	3	2	0	1	7	3	4
Barcelona	3	1	2	0	4	2	4
Galatasaray	3	0	2	1	0	3	2
Moscow Spartak	3	0	2	1	3	6	2

GROUP B *(March 2)*
ANDERLECHT 1 (Nilis 88)
FC PORTO 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 17,000.
Anderlecht: De Wilde — Suray (Crasson 46), Chidi Nwanu, Albert, Emmers, Walem, Versavel (Kooiman 90), Degryse, Boffin, Bosman, Nilis.
FC Porto: Vitor Baia — Bandeirinha, Rui Jorge, Aloisio, Fernando Couto, Jorge Costa, Secretario, Andre, Semedo (Rui Filipe 77), Drulovic, Kostadinov.

MILAN 2 (Maldini 48, Savicevic 68)
WERDER BREMEN 1 (Basler 54)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 41,239.
Milan: Rossi — Tassotti, Maldini, Donadoni, Costacurta, Baresi, Eranio (Simone 46), Desailly, Boban, Savicevic (Albertini 90), Massaro.
Werder Bremen: Reck — Wolter, Legat, Neubarth, Beiersdorfer, Basler, Eilts, Votava, Bode (Hobsch 78), Herzog, Rufer.

GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Milan	3	2	1	0	5	1	5
Anderlecht	3	1	1	1	4	5	3
Werder Bremen	3	1	0	2	8	8	2
Porto	3	1	0	2	3	6	2

CUP-WINNERS CUP
Quarter-finals — 1st leg
(Mar 2 unless stated)
BENFICA 1 (Isaias 89)
BAYER LEVERKUSEN 1 (Happe 64)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 85,000 *(Mar 1)*

TORINO 0
ARSENAL 0
Att: 32,480. **Ref:** Quiniou (Fra)
Torino: Galli, Sottil (Sinigaglia 61), Jarni, Cois, Gregucci, Fusi, Musi, Fortunato, Silenzi (Carbone 68), Francescoli, Venturin.
Arsenal: Seaman, Dixon, Winterburn, Davis (Selley 83), Bould, Adams, Jensen, Campbell, Smith, Merson, Hillier.

AJAX 0
PARMA 0
Att: 40,000 *(Mar 3)*

REAL MADRID 0
PARIS SAINT GERMAIN 1 (George Weah 32)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 62,000 *(Mar 3)*

UEFA CUP
Quarter-finals — 1st leg
(Mar 2 unless stated)
BOAVISTA 1 (Owubokiri 38)
KARLSRUHE 1 (Wittwer 77)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 18,500.

BORUSSIA DORTMUND 1 (Schulz 83)
INTERNAZIONALE 3 (Jonk 33, 36, Shalimov 89). **HT:** 0-2. **Att:** 35,800 *(Mar 1)*.

CAGLIARI 1 (Dely Valdes 59)
JUVENTUS 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 25,000 *(Mar 1)*

AUSTRIA SALZBURG 1 (Huetter 30)
EINTRACHT FRANKFURT 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 47,000 *(in Vienna, Mar 3)*.
Salzburg: Konrad — Weber, Pfeifenberger, Fuerstaller (Stadler 46), Winklhofer, Lainer, Marquinho, Huetter, Aigner, Jurcevic, Amerhauser.
Frankfurt: Stein — Dickhaut, Komljenovic, Zchadadse, Bommer, Gaudino, Binz (Moller 89), Falkenmayer, Weber, Mihajlovic (Becker 75), Yeboah.

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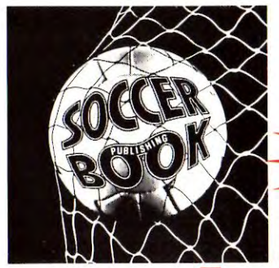

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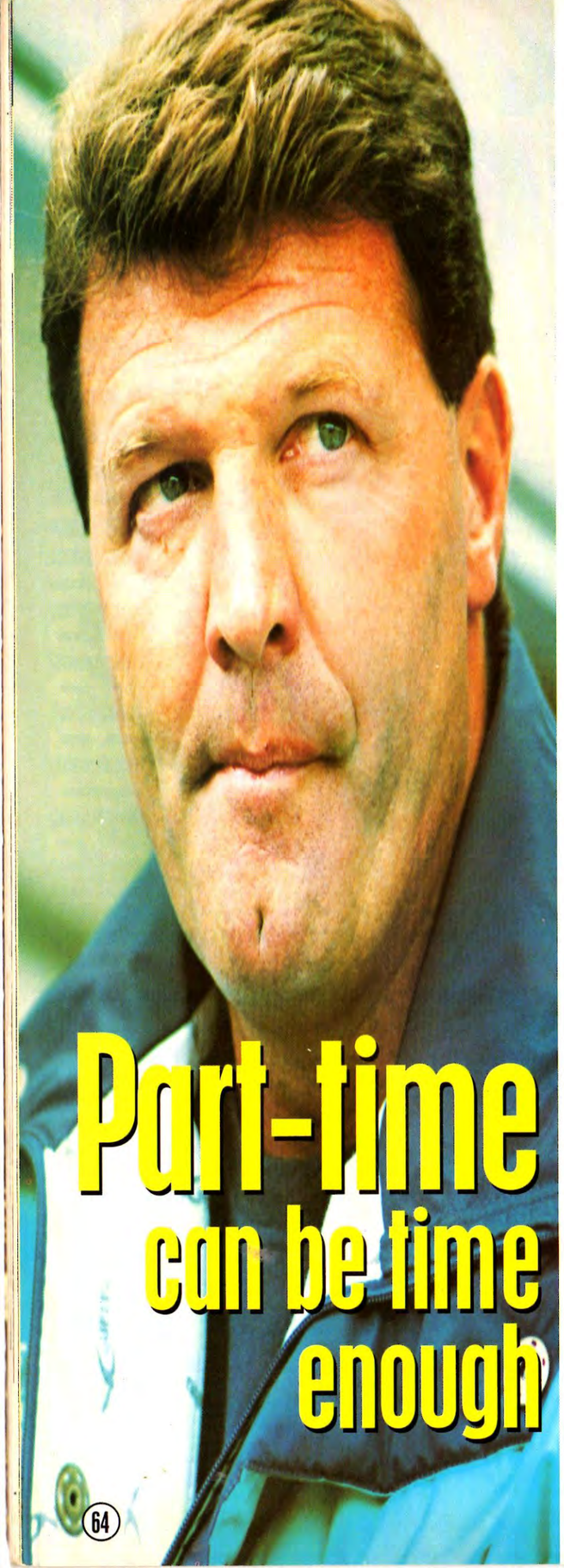


Part-time can be time enough

BRIAN GLANVILLE'S LAST WORD

JOHN TOSHACK has become the new, part time, manager of Wales; and why not?

No disrespect to Terry Yorath. He clearly has had a rough deal. Apart from one shocking result in Romania, the Welsh World Cup team did well under him, and they had had some excellent results, not least against Germany, in the past.

The surreptitious way in which Toshack (left) was approached, and Yorath bombed out, reflected little credit on the Welsh FA. But part-time managers? I'm all for them. Far too much importance has been attached to managers at all levels.

Herbert Chapman, in his Leeds, Huddersfield and Arsenal days, was an active and dynamic manager. Compare that with Brian Clough, seldom seen by his players during the week. If he went to the training ground, Peter Shilton once told me, the difference would be evident at once: "It was attitude training.

But when Clough suddenly erupted in the dressing-room before a game, it would be all systems go. The impact would be substantial. Not least because Clough's presence would have a rarity value.

Clough could have become a successful England manager, but only on a part-time basis. To rule as he did at Derby and Nottingham by force of personality, and his control of the purse strings, would not have worked in the normal context of an England manager.

To have made, so to speak, his parachute drop only from match to match, from time to time, could have been really effective.

And now, Terry Venables. An appointment about which I confess to a mass of mixed feelings.

When I was asked, last summer, to name one man as the successor to the benighted Graham Taylor, Venables was the name I gave. It is the name I'd have given in 1990, though with no hope he'd be appointed; and for several years before that.

The recent change of heart and front by the FA has been little short of astounding. I told him once in Barcelona, and he seemed to agree with me, that despite his credentials, he'd never get the job, because the old buffers of the FA were frightened by his personality, his versatility, his intelligence.

Unfairly treated . . . Terry Yorath.

Then, at the very moment when Venners was under assault by *Panorama* and *The Financial Times*, when he was still locked in a bitter battle with Alan Sugar, when there was no pressure to appoint a full-time manager, what do the FA do but go ahead and pick him?

Thereby, of course, running an appalling risk that a "worst-case scenario" would oblige them to get rid of him.

A sudden, public pronouncement in favour of Venables by the egregious Bert (Blurt?) Millichip wrong footed the FA committee making the England choice, or perhaps they would have been a little more circumspect in their appointment. Venners, maybe, on a match-to-match basis.

My own choice would have alighted on Switzerland's English manager Roy Hodgson, much younger than Venables, who did wonderfully well to take his team to the World Cup finals.

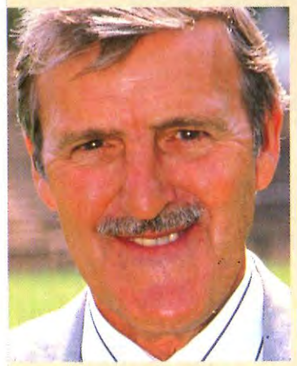
Like Arrigo Sacchi of Italy, Hodgson never played top-class football. Sacchi never played even decent amateur football. But what of that?

Initially, Hodgson, Croydon-born and a great success with Malmo, declared he was not interested in the England role. But when I spoke to him last December, immediately after the World Cup draw, he told me that, as an Englishman, he would be flattered to be approached.

The selection committee certainly should have approached him. They knew quite well that he appeared to have changed his mind.

They chose instead, a manager who should have had the job years ago, but who today constitutes an evident risk.

In praise of Hill



COME BACK Jimmy Hill, I cried, after he had so very aptly and emphatically damned Eric Cantona for his shocking back-heel foul on John Polston of Norwich. It was indeed, as Hill said, "despicable" and it was unwise of Manchester United's manager, Alex Ferguson, to attack Hill *(left)* after the game.

Cantona, alas, always has been a strange anomalous blend of brilliant and violent. He was the true architect of United's belated championship. But if you take him, you have to take him, like Oliver Cromwell, warts and all. Poetry, painting, marvellous technical ability. And a sudden, alarming propensity to show, almost literally, the cloven hoof.

Hill made his comments after that match, but we very seldom see him on *BBC Match of the Day*, which is where he's needed.

No disrespect to one of my favourite footballers, the exemplary Trevor Brooking, nor to Alan Hansen, who has only once so far crept into Colemanballs in *Private Eye*. But they need grit in their oyster, and it's never going to be provided by the immaculate, impeccable Des Lynam, linkman extraordinary, a tribute to television and its powers of alchemy.

For all his faultless professionalism, Lynam has nothing of substance to offer. When he tries, it can be embarrassing.

But at least Lynam is your consummate, relaxed, urbane professional. Quite what the anonymous Ray Stubbs is doing in such an exalted role is obscure to me.

Hill's exclusion baffles me. He can drive you to distraction, he can be opinionated and provocative, but these are not necessarily defects. As he showed over the Cantona affair, at least he has the courage of his convictions.

Talking heads . . . Alan Hansen, Desmond Lynam and Trevor Brooking.

A boom on Sunday

NOW to Chrysalis, Italian football, and *Channel 4*. Overall, Chrysalis have done a good job and are to be congratulated.

To have a live Italian match each Sunday is a boon, a recorded match very late on Tuesday a slightly lesser one. To have James Richardson's lively interviews with Italian managers and players on Saturday mornings is commendable, too.

But surely it is time for Chrysalis to stop giving us Italian live football on the cheap.

I sympathise with their problems in getting slow motion to commentators actually on the spot.

But to have Peter Brackley and his cohort sitting in a London studio making out that they are giving us the real thing is something which may not meet the demands of the Trades Descriptions Act.

A to Z OF THE WORLD'S GREAT GROUNDS

By SIMON INGLIS, author of The Football Grounds of Great Britain and The Football Grounds of Europe

HAMPDEN PARK

Capacity: 38,300 all-seated but eventually will be 60,000
Opened: 31 October 1903
Location: South of Glasgow city centre, in a hill-top suburb exotically called Mount Florida, roughly half a mile from Queen's Park (after which the stadium's resident team is named).

● Hampden Park is unique, or at least uniquely eccentric. A national stadium which never stages athletics or rugby and is the sole asset of an amateur club, the once-great Queen's Park, who now struggle to attract gates of more than 500 to a ground which, in its heyday, once squeezed in a British record of 149,415 (for Scotland v England in April 1937). Hampden also holds the record for European football, when 136,505 saw the Celtic v Leeds Champions Cup semi-final in 1970.

Yet only a decade after this the huge bowled stadium was on the brink of extinction, and not until 1992 did a much delayed £5 million government grant finally secure its future. Not everyone was pleased. Many Scots hoped for a modern, new stadium more conveniently located on the outskirts of Glasgow. The redeveloped Hampden will be unveiled on March 23 for a friendly v Holland.

The sweeping new cantilevered roofs should also do wonders for the famous Hampden Roar. But the work is only half-complete. The antiquated, largely wooden South Stand still survives with its wonderfully castellated entranceway, its apparently precarious roof-top press box and its capacity cut from 10,000 to just 4,500. To replace this and finish off the West (or Rangers) End will cost a further £15 million. Meanwhile over in Edinburgh the Scottish Rugby Union are just completing a £41million redevelopment of Murrayfield into a 65,000-capacity stadium which will stage but a handful of major matches per year. Ah those crazy British!

***World Soccer rating:** 7 (out of 10)*

HUNGARY

Name: Nepstadion
Capacity: 72,000 all-seated
Opened: 20 August 1953
Location: In the Pest district of Budapest, a couple of miles due east from the Danube.

● Pest is one of Europe's richest hunting grounds for dedicated stadium buffs. From Kispest-Honved in the south to Ujpesti in the north, the city's football grounds are full of architectural quirks and delights. The Nep, or People's Stadium, does not disappoint either. Although one of several national stadia built by Communist Bloc countries during the early 1950s, it has none of the graceless pomposity of Leipzig or Bucharest.

It also fully deserves its claim to be the People's stadium. While such as Puskas, Kocsis and Hidegkuti did their stuff on the pitch, an army of 10,000 "volunteers" built the 100,000-capacity stadium and its surrounding sports park. Post-Communism, the stadium remains uncovered and still fairly basic, but it continues to serve the people well, staging regular athletics and concerts as well as foci (pronounced futzi — the endearing local term for football). Improvements are planned in time for the 1996 European Athletics Championships.

***World Soccer rating:** 6 (out of 10)*

HAMBURG

Name: Volksparkstadion, or People's Park Stadium
Capacity: 61, 234 (28,500 seats)
Opened: September 1925, but completely remodelled in 1953, when SV Hamburg moved in.
Location: Half-an-hour's stroll from the nearest station, in the middle of a large park, on the edge of an industrial estate, in Altona, which is to Hamburg what Watford is to London. In other words, leave in plenty of time before kick-off.

● One of several classic German stadiums and sportparks of the Weimar period, modernised after World War II, tarted up for the 1974 World Cup but now looking so jaded that its days as one of Germany's prime international venues seem to be over.

This no doubt gives rise to considerable *schadenfreude* among fans of SV Hamburg's rivals at St Pauli, whose own inner-city ground is wonderfully cramped and atmospheric by comparison. The Volksparkstadion may yet be saved however. SV have offered to buy the site from the city of Hamburg for just DM1, with the intention of turning it into a major leisure complex. The stadium itself needs the Hampden treatment — re-roofing and re-seating — and, let's hope, for those of us who don't share the Volks *wanderlust*, re-routing the railway link.

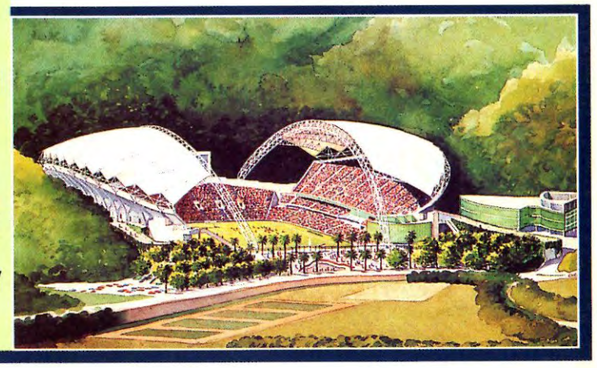
***World Soccer rating:** 6 (out of 10)*

HONG KONG

❒ They called it Happy Valley, but the 28,000-capacity Government Stadium in Hong Kong is no more. Built in 1953 and regular host to such football clubs as Happy Valley, South China and Sea Bee, this relatively modern and compact venue has now been replaced by a lavish all-singing, all-dancing stadium, due to open in April for the Rugby Sevens and football's Viceroy Cup tournament.

The 40,000-capacity Hong Kong Stadium, designed by the same US architects responsible for the Giants and Joe Robbie Stadiums, features two translucent, arched roofs, each spanning 240 metres and soaring above the three-tiered stands. Views both from within the new stadium and from the surrounding tropical hills of So Kon Po are quite spectacular.

The cost of this extraordinary stadium was £60 million, all paid for by the landlords, the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club, whose generosity makes this the odds-on favourite to become one of the best new grounds in the Far East.



NEXT MONTH IN

WORLD SOCCER

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Part 3 of the World Cup countdown

Plus Glanville . . . Brooking . . .
Radnedge . . . international results . . .

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Albertini in action.

The stadium and...

Close up and...

The stadium again.

Ielpo's frown.

What legs!

The act of supporting.

Savicevic's stare.

100% Milan.

Supporter in disguise.

A view of the stadium.

Committed supporter.

A.C. MILAN :

SOCCER IS LIFE.

ZanOn

The flag of victory.

Lady supporter.

The red and the black.

Shopping the San Siro way.

That's imaginative!

Come on Milan!

Red and black devil.

Rossi astonished.

Albertini's boot.

lotto
Italian Sports Design